THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Founded Aº Dⁱ 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

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DRAWN BY JAMES PRESTON

The Clew of the Silver Spoons—By Robert Barr

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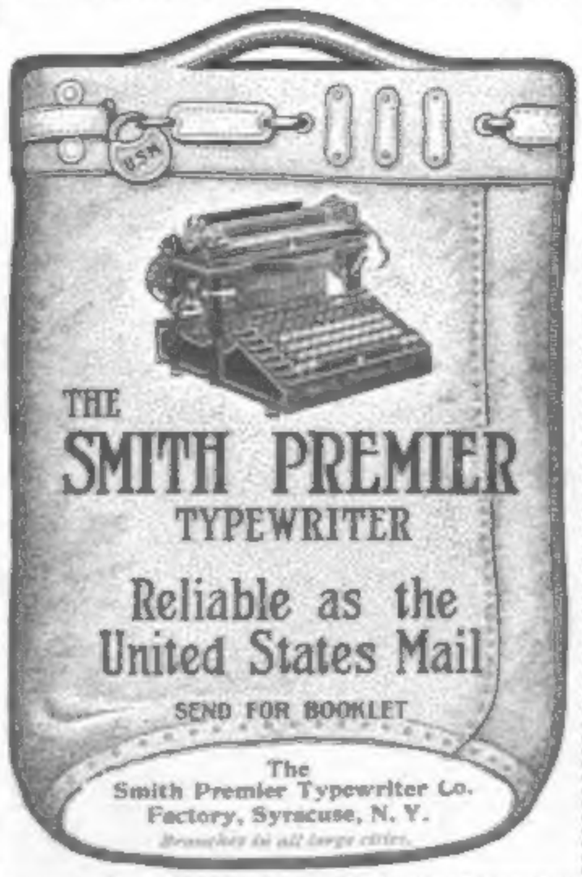

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The Clew of the Silver Spoons

A Chapter from the Memoirs of M. Valmont, Formerly High in the Confidence of the French Government

BY ROBERT BARR

WHEN the card was brought in to me I looked upon it with some misgiving, for I scented a commercial transaction, and although such cases are lucrative enough, nevertheless I, Eugène Valmont, formerly high in the service of the French Government, do not care to be connected with them. They usually pertain to sordid business affairs that present little that is of interest to a man who, in his time, has dealt with subtle questions of diplomacy upon which the welfare of nations sometimes turned.

The name of Bentham Gibbes is familiar to every one, connected, as it is, with the much-advertised pickles, whose glaring announcements in crude crimson and green strike the eye everywhere in England, and shock the artistic taste wherever seen. Me! I have never tasted them, and shall not, so long as a French restaurant remains open in London, but I doubt not they are as pronounced to the palate as their advertisement is distressing to the eye. If, then, this gross pickle manufacturer expected me to track down those who were infringing upon the recipes for making his so-called sauces, chutneys and the like he would find himself mistaken, for I was now in a position to pick and choose my cases, and a case of pickles did not allure me. "Beware of imitations," said the advertisement; "none genuine without a fac-simile of the signature of Bentham Gibbes." Ah, well, not for me were either the pickles or the tracking of imitators. A forged check: yes, if you like, but the forged signature of Mr. Gibbes on a pickle-bottle was not for me. Nevertheless, I said to Armand:

"Show the gentleman in," and he did so.

To my astonishment there entered a young man, quite correctly dressed in dark frock coat, faultless waistcoat and trousers that proclaimed the Bond Street tailor. When he spoke, his voice and language were those of a gentleman.

"Monsieur Valmont?" he inquired.

"At your service," I replied, bowing and waving my hand as Armand placed a chair for him and withdrew.

"I am a barrister with chambers in the Temple," began Mr. Gibbes, "and for some days a matter has been troubling me about which I have now come to seek your advice, your name having been suggested by a friend in whom I confided."

"Am I acquainted with him?" I asked.

"I think not," replied Mr. Gibbes; "he also is a barrister with chambers in the same building as my own. Lionel Dacre is his name."

"I never heard of him."

"Very likely not. Nevertheless, he recommended you as a man who could keep his own counsel, and if you take up this case I desire the utmost secrecy preserved, whatever may be the outcome."

I bowed, but made no protestation. Secrecy is a matter of course with me.

The Englishman paused for a few moments as if he expected fervent assurances; then went on with no traces of disappointment on his countenance at not receiving them:

"On the night of the twenty-third I gave a little dinner to six friends of mine in my own rooms. I may say that so far as I am aware they are all gentlemen of unimpeachable character. On the night of the dinner I was detained later than I expected at a reception, and, in driving to the Temple, was still further delayed by a block of traffic in Piccadilly, so that when I arrived at my chambers there was barely time for me to dress and receive my guests. My man, Johnson, had everything laid out ready for me in my dressing-room, and as I passed through to it I hurriedly flung off the coat I was wearing and carelessly left it over the back of a chair in the dining-room, where neither Johnson nor myself noticed it until my attention was called to it after the dinner was over. This coat had an inside pocket. Usually any frock coat I wear at an afternoon reception has not an inside pocket, but I had been rather on the rush all day. My father is a manufacturer whose name may be familiar to you, and I am on the directors' board of his company. On this occasion I had to take a cab from the city to the reception I spoke of, and had not time to go and change at my rooms. The reception was a somewhat Bohemian affair, extremely interesting, of course, but not too particular as to costume, so I went as I was. In this inside pocket rested a thin package, composed of two pieces of pasteboard, and between them five twenty-pound Bank of England notes, folded lengthwise and held in place between the pasteboards by an elastic rubber band. I had thrown the coat over the chair in such a way that the inside pocket was exposed and the ends of the notes plainly recognizable. Over the coffee and cigars one of my guests laughingly called attention to what he termed my vulgar display of wealth, and Johnson, in some confusion at having neglected to put away the coat, now picked it up and took it to the reception-room where the wraps of my guests lay about promiscuously. He should, of course, have placed it in my wardrobe, but he said afterward he thought it belonged to the guest who had spoken. You see, he was in my dressing-room when I threw my coat on the chair in making my way thither, and, of course, he had not noticed the coat in the hurry of arriving guests, otherwise he would have put it where it belonged. After everybody had gone Johnson came to me and said the coat was there but the package was missing, nor has any trace of it been found since that night."

"The dinner was fetched in from outside, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"How many waiters served it?"

"Two. They are men who have often been in my employ before, but, apart from that, they had left my chambers before the incident of the coat happened."

"Neither of them went into the reception-room, I take it?"

I WAS STARTLED BY THE EXPRESSION IN HIS EYES. THEY WERE FIXED ON A DISTANT CORNER OF THE ROOM

CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

"No. I am certain that not even suspicion can attach to either of the waiters."

"Your man Johnson ——?"

"Has been with me for years. He could easily have stolen much more than the hundred pounds if he had wished to do so, but I have never known him to take a penny that did not belong to him."

"Will you favor me with the names of your guests, Mr. Gibbes?"

"Viscount Stern sat at my right hand, and at my left Lord Templemere; Sir John Sanclere next to him, and Angus McKeller next to Sanclere. After Viscount Stern was Lionel Dacre, and at his right was Vincent Innes."

On a sheet of paper I had written the names of the guests, and noted their places at the table.

"Which guest drew your attention to the money?"

"Lionel Dacre."

"Is there a window looking out from the reception-room?"

"Two of them."

"Were they fastened on the night of the dinner-party?"

"I could not be sure; Johnson would know, very likely. You are hinting at the possibility of a thief coming in through a reception-room window. I think such a solution highly improbable. My rooms are on the third floor, and a thief would scarcely venture to make an entrance when he could not but know there was a company being entertained. Besides, the coat was there but an hour or so, and whoever stole those notes knew where they were."

"That sounds reasonable," I had to admit. "Have you spoken to any one of your loss?"

"To no one but Dacre, who recommended me to see you. Oh, yes, and to Johnson, of course."

I could not help noting that this was the fourth or fifth time Dacre's name had come up during our conversation.

"Why to Dacre?" I asked.

"Oh, well, you see, he occupies chambers in the same building, on the ground floor. He is a very good fellow, and we are by way of being firm friends. Then it was he who had called attention to the money, so I thought he should know the sequel."

"How did he take your news?"

"Now that you call attention to the fact, he seemed slightly troubled. I should like to say, however, that you must not be misled by that. Lionel Dacre could no more steal than he could lie."

"Did he seem surprised when you mentioned the theft?"

Bentham Gibbes paused a moment before replying, knitting his brows in thought.

"No," he said at last; "and, come to think of it, it almost appears as if he had been expecting my announcement."

"Doesn't that strike you as rather strange, Mr. Gibbes?"

"Really, my mind is in such a whirl I don't know what to think. But it's perfectly absurd to suspect Dacre. If you knew the man you would understand what I mean. He comes of an excellent family, and he is—oh! he is Lionel Dacre, and when you have said that you have made any suspicion absurd."

"I suppose you had the rooms thoroughly searched? The packet didn't drop out and remain unnoticed in some corner?"

"No, Johnson and myself examined every inch of the premises."

"Have you the numbers of the notes?"

"Yes, I got them from the bank next morning. Payment was stopped, and so far not one of the five has been presented."

Of course, one or more may have been cashed at some shop, but none has been offered to any of the banks."

"A twenty-pound note is not accepted without scrutiny, so the chances are the thief may have some difficulty in disposing of them."

"As I told you, I don't mind the loss of the money at all. It is the uncertainty, the uneasiness caused by the incident that troubles me. You will comprehend that when I say that if you are good enough to interest yourself in this case I shall be disappointed if your fee does not exceed the amount I have lost."

Mr. Gibbes rose as he said this, and I accompanied him to the door, assuring him that I should do my best to solve the mystery. Whether he sprang from pickles or not, I realized he was a polished and generous gentleman, who estimated the services of a professional expert like myself at their true value.

I shall not give the details of my researches during the following few days, because the trend of them must be gone over in the remarkable interview I had somewhat later, and there is little use in repeating myself. Suffice it to say, then, that an examination of the rooms and a close cross-questioning of Johnson satisfied me that he and the two waiters were innocent. I was also convinced that no thief made his way through the window, and I came to the conclusion that the notes were stolen by one of the guests. Further investigation convinced me that the thief was no other than Lionel Dacre, the only one of the six in pressing need of money at that time. I had Dacre shadowed, and, during one of his absences, made the acquaintance of his man Hopper, a surly, impolite brute, who accepted my golden sovereign quickly enough, but gave me little in exchange for it. But while I conversed with him there arrived in the passage, where we were talking together, a huge case of champagne, bearing one of the best known names in the trade, and branded as being of the vintage of '78. Now I knew that the product of Camelot Frères is not bought as cheaply as British beer, and I also had learned that two short weeks before Mr. Lionel Dacre was at his wit's end for money. Yet he was still the same briefless barrister he had ever been.

On the morning after my unsatisfactory conversation with his man Hopper I was astonished to receive the following note, written on a dainty correspondence card:

> 3 AND 4, VELLUM BUILDINGS,
> Inner Temple, E. C.
>
> Mr. Lionel Dacre presents his compliments to Monsieur Eugène Valmont, and would be obliged if Monsieur Valmont could make it convenient to call upon him in his chambers to-morrow morning at eleven.

Had the man become aware that he was being shadowed, or did the surly servant inform him of the inquiries made? I was soon to know. I called punctually at eleven next morning, and was received with charming urbanity by Mr. Dacre himself. The taciturn Hopper had evidently been sent away for the occasion.

"My dear Monsieur Valmont, I am delighted to meet you," said the young man with more of effusiveness than I had ever noticed in an Englishman before, although his very next words supplied an explanation that did not occur to me until afterward as somewhat far-fetched. "I believe we are by way of being countrymen, and, therefore, although the hour is early, I hope you will allow me to offer you some of that bottled sunshine of the year '78, from *la belle France*, to whose prosperity and honor we shall drink together. For such a toast any hour is propitious;" and to my amazement he brought forth from the case I had seen arrive two days before a bottle of that superb Camelot Frères' '78.

"Now," said I to myself, "it is going to be difficult to keep a clear head if the aroma of that nectar rises to the brain. But tempting as is the cup, I shall drink sparingly, and hope he may not be so judicious."

Sensitive, I already experienced the charm of his personality, and well understood the friendship Mr. Bentham Gibbes felt for him. But I saw the trap spread before me. He expected, under the influence of champagne and courtesy, to extract a promise from me which I must find myself unable to give.

"Sir, you interest me by claiming kinship with France. I had understood that you belonged to one of the oldest families of England."

"Ah, England!" he cried with an expressive gesture of outspreading hands truly Parisian in its significance. "The trunk belongs to England, of course, but the root—ah! the root, Monsieur Valmont, penetrated the soil from which this wine of the gods has been drawn."

Then, filling my glass and his own, he cried:

"To France, which my family left in the year 1066!"

I could not help laughing at his fervent ejaculation.

"1066! Ah, that is a long time ago, Mr. Dacre."

"In years, perhaps; in feelings but a day. My forefathers came over to steal, and, Jove, how well they accomplished it! They stole the whole country—something like a theft, say I—under that prince of robbers well named the Conqueror. In our secret hearts we all admire a great thief, and if not a great one, then an expert one, who covers his tracks so perfectly that the hounds of justice are baffled in attempting to follow them. Now, even you, Monsieur Valmont (I can see you are the most generous of men, with a lively sympathy

UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE BLACK COFFEE I REASONED IT OUT

found to perfection only in France), even you must suffer a pang of regret when you lay a thief by the heels who has done his task deftly."

"I fear, Mr. Dacre, you credit me with a magnanimity to which I dare not lay claim. The criminal is a danger to society."

"True, true; you are in the right, Monsieur. Still, admit there are cases that would touch you tenderly. For example, a man ordinarily honest; a great need; a sudden opportunity. He takes that of which another has abundance, and he nothing. What, then, Monsieur? Is the man to be sent to perdition for a momentary weakness?"

His words astonished me. Was I on the verge of hearing a confession? It almost amounted to that already.

"Mr. Dacre," I said, "I cannot enter into the subtleties you pursue. My duty is to find the criminal."

"You are in the right, Monsieur Valmont, and I am enchanted to find so sensible a head on French shoulders. Although you are a more recent arrival, if I may say so, than myself, you nevertheless already give utterance to sentiments which do honor to England. It is your duty to hunt down the criminal. Very well, in that I think I can aid you, so I have taken the liberty of requesting your attendance here this morning. Let me fill your glass again, Monsieur Valmont."

"No more, I beg of you, Mr. Dacre."

"What, do you think the receiver is as bad as the thief?"

I was so taken aback at his remark that I suppose my face showed the amazement within me. But the young man merely laughed with apparently free-hearted enjoyment, poured more wine in his own glass, and tossed it off. Not knowing what to say, I changed the trend of conversation.

"Mr. Gibbes said you had been kind enough to recommend me to his attention. May I ask how you came to hear of me?"

"Ah, who has not heard of the renowned Monsieur Valmont?" and as he said this, for the first time there began to grow a suspicion in my mind that he was chaffing me, as it is called in England, a procedure which I cannot endure. Indeed, if this young man practiced it in my own country he would find himself with a duel on his hands before he had gone far. However, the next instant his voice resumed its original fascination, and I listened to it as to some delicious melody.

"I have only to mention my cousin, Lady Gladys Dacre, and you will at once understand why I recommended you to my friend. The case of Lady Gladys, you will remember, required a delicate touch which is not always to be had in this land of England, except when those who possess the gift do us the honor to sojourn with us."

I noticed that my glass was again filled, and as I bowed my acknowledgments of his compliment I indulged in another sip of the delicious wine, and then I sighed, for I began to realize it was going to be difficult for me, in spite of my disclaimer, to tell this man's friend he had stolen the money. All this time he had been sitting on the edge of the table, while I occupied a chair at its end. He sat there in careless fashion, swinging a foot to and fro. Now he sprang to the floor, and drew up a chair, placing on the table a blank sheet of paper. Then he took from the mantel-shelf a packet of letters, and I was astonished to see they were held together by two bits of cardboard and a rubber band. With great nonchalance he slipped off the rubber band, threw it and the pieces of cardboard on the table before me, leaving the documents loose to his hand.

"Now, Monsieur Valmont," he cried jauntily, "you have been occupied for several days on this case, the case of my dear friend, Bentham Gibbes, who is one of the best fellows in the world."

"He said the same of you, Mr. Dacre."

"I am gratified to hear it. Would you mind letting me know to what point your researches have led you?"

"They have led me to a direction rather than to a point."

"Aha! In the direction of a man, of course?"

"Certainly."

"Who is he?"

"Will you pardon me if I decline to answer you at the present moment?"

"That means you are not sure."

"It may mean, Mr. Dacre, that I am employed by Mr. Gibbes, and do not feel at liberty to disclose to another the results of my quest without his permission."

"But Mr. Bentham Gibbes and I are entirely at one in this matter. Perhaps you are aware that I am the only person with whom he discussed the case besides yourself."

"That is undoubtedly true, Mr. Dacre; still, you see the difficulty of my position."

"Yes, I do, and so shall not press you further. But I also have been interesting myself—in a purely amateurish way, of course. You would, perhaps, have no disinclination to learn whether my deductions agree with yours."

"Not in the least. I should be very glad to know the conclusion at which you have arrived. May I ask if you suspect any one in particular?"

"Yes, I do."

"Will you name him?"

"No, I shall copy the admirable reticence you yourself have shown. And now let us attack this mystery in a sane and businesslike manner. You have already examined the room. Well, here is a rough sketch of it. There is the table; in this corner the chair on which the coat was flung. Here sat Gibbes at the head of the table. Those on the left-hand side had their backs to the chair. I, being in the centre to the right, saw the chair, the coat and the notes, and called attention to them. Now, our first duty is to find a motive. If it were a murder our motive might be hatred, revenge, robbery, what you like. As it is simply the stealing of money the man must have been either a born thief or else some hitherto innocent person pressed to the crime by great necessity. Do you agree with me, Monsieur Valmont?"

"Perfectly. You follow exactly the line of my own reasoning."

"Very well. It is unlikely that a born thief was one of Mr. Gibbes' guests. Therefore we are reduced to look for a man under the spur of necessity; a man who has no money of his own, but who must raise a certain amount, let us say by a certain date, if we can find such a man in that company. Do you not agree with me that he is likely to be the thief?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then let us start our process of elimination. Out goes Viscount Stern, a man with 20,000 acres of land, and no one knows what income. I mark off the name of Lord Templemere, one of her Majesty's judges, entirely above suspicion. Next Sir John Sanclere: he, also, is rich, but Vincent Innes is still richer, so the pencil obliterates his name. Now we have Angus McKellar, an author of some note, as you are well aware, deriving a good income from his books and a better one from his plays; a canny Scot, so we may rub his name from our paper and our memory. How do my erasures correspond with yours, Monsieur Valmont?"

"They correspond exactly, Mr. Dacre."

"I am flattered to hear it. There remains one name untouched: Mr. Lionel Dacre, the descendant, as I have said, of robbers."

"I have not said so, Mr. Dacre."

"Ah! my dear Valmont, the politeness of your country asserts itself. Let us not be deluded, but follow our inquiry wherever it leads. I suspect Lionel Dacre. What do you know of his circumstances before the dinner?"

As I made no reply he looked up at me with this frank, boyish face illumined by a winning smile.

"You know nothing of his circumstances?" he asked.

"It grieves me to state that I do. Mr. Lionel Dacre was penniless on the night of the dinner on the twenty-third."

"Oh, don't exaggerate, Monsieur Valmont," cried Dacre with a laugh; "he had one sixpence, two pennies and a halfpenny. How did you know he was penniless?"

"I knew he ordered a case of champagne from the London representative of Camelot Frères, and was refused unless he paid the money down."

"Quite right; and then when you were talking to Hopper you saw that case of champagne delivered. Excellent, excellent, Monsieur Valmont. But will a man steal, think you, to supply himself with even so delicious a wine as this we have been tasting—and, by the way, forgive my neglect. Allow me to fill your glass, Monsieur Valmont."

"Not another drop, if you will excuse me, Mr. Dacre."

"Ah, yes, champagne should not be mixed with evidence. When we have finished, perhaps. What further proof have you?"

"I have proof that Mr. Dacre was threatened with bankruptcy if on the twenty-fourth he did not pay a bill of seventy-eight pounds that had long been outstanding. I have proof that this was paid, not on the twenty-fourth, but on the twenty-sixth. Mr. Dacre had gone to the solicitor and assured him he would have the money on that date, whereupon he was given two days' grace."

"Ah, well, he was entitled to three, you know, in law. Yes, there, Monsieur Valmont, you touch the fatal point. The threat of bankruptcy will drive a man in Dacre's position to almost any crime. Bankruptcy to a barrister spells ruin. It means a career blighted: it means a life buried with little chance of resurrection. I see you grasp the supreme importance of that bit of evidence. The case of champagne is as nothing compared with it, and this reminds me that in the crisis I shall take another sip, with your permission. Sure you won't join me?"

"Not at this juncture, Mr. Dacre."

"I envy your moderation. Here's to the success of our search, Monsieur Valmont."

I felt sorry for the gay young fellow as with smiling face he drank the champagne.

"Now, Monsieur," he went on, "I am amazed to learn how much you have found out. Really, I think tradespeople, solicitors and all such should keep better guard on their tongues than they do. Nevertheless, these documents I have at my elbow, and which I expected would surprise you, are merely the letters and receipts. Here is the letter from the solicitor threatening me with bankruptcy; here is his receipt dated the twenty-sixth; here is the refusal of the wine merchant, and here is his receipt for the money. Here are smaller bills liquidated. With my pencil we will add them up. Seventy-eight pounds bulks large. We add the smaller items, and it totals ninety-three pounds, seven shillings and fourpence. Let us now examine my purse. Here is a five-pound note; there is a minted sovereign. Here is twelve and sixpence in silver; here is twopence in coppers. Now the purse is empty. Let us add this to the amount on the paper. Do my eyes deceive me, or is the total exactly a hundred pounds? Thus is the stolen money accounted for."

"Pardon me, Mr. Dacre," I said, "but there is still a sovereign on the mantelpiece."

Dacre threw back his head, and laughed with greater heartiness than I had yet known him to indulge in during our short acquaintance.

"By Jove!" he cried, "you've got me there. I'd forgotten entirely about that pound on the mantelpiece, which belongs to you."

"To me? Impossible!"

"It does, and cannot interfere in the least with our hundred-pound calculation. That is the sovereign you gave to my man Hopper, who, believing me hard-pressed, took it, that I might have the enjoyment of it. Hopper belongs to our family, or the family belongs to him, I am never sure which. You must have missed in him the deferential bearing of a manservant in Paris, yet he is true gold, like the sovereign you bestowed upon him and he bestowed upon me. Now here, Monsieur, is the evidence of the theft, together with the rubber band and two pieces of cardboard. Ask my friend Gibbes to examine them minutely. They are all at your disposition, Monsieur, and you will learn how much easier it is to deal with the master than with the servant when you wish information. All the gold you possess would not have wrung these incriminating documents from old Hopper. I had to send him away to-day to the West End, fearing that in his brutal British way he might have assaulted you if he got an inkling of your mission."

"Mr. Dacre," said I slowly, "you have thoroughly convinced me——"

"I thought I should," he interrupted with a laugh.

"——that you did not take the money."

"Oho! this is a change of wind, surely. Many a man has been hanged through a chain of circumstantial evidence much weaker than this that I have exhibited to you. Don't you see the subtlety of my action? Ninety-nine persons in a hundred would say, 'No man could be such a fool as to put Valmont on his track, and then place in Valmont's hands such striking evidence.' But there comes in my craftiness. Of course, the rock you run up against will be Gibbes' incredulity. The first question he will ask you may be this: 'Why did not Dacre come and borrow the money from me?' Now there you have a certain weakness in your chain of evidence. I knew perfectly well that Gibbes would lend me the money, and he knew perfectly well that if I were pressed to the wall I should ask him."

"Mr. Dacre," said I, "you have been playing with me. I should resent that with most men, but whether it is your own genial manner, or the effect of this excellent champagne, or both together, I forgive you. But I am convinced of another thing. You know who took the money."

"I don't know, but I suspect."

"Will you tell me whom you suspect?"

"That would not be fair, but I shall now take the liberty of filling your glass with champagne."

"I am your guest, Mr. Dacre."

"Admirably answered, Monsieur," he replied, pouring out the wine, "and now I shall give you the clew. Find out all about the story of the silver spoons."

"The story of the silver spoons? What silver spoons?"

"Ah, that is the point. You step out of the Temple into Fleet Street, seize by the shoulder the first man you meet, and ask him to tell you about the silver spoons. There are but two men and two spoons concerned. When you learn who those two men are you will know that one of them did not take the money, and I give you my assurance that the other did."

"You speak in mystery, Mr. Dacre."

"But certainly, for I am speaking to Monsieur Eugène Valmont."

"I echo your words, sir. Admirably answered. You put me on my mettle, and I flatter myself that I see your kindly drift. You wish me to solve the mystery of this stolen money. Sir, you do me honor, and I drink to your health."

"To yours, Monsieur," said Lionel Dacre; "and here is a further piece of information which my friend Gibbes would never have given you. When he told me the money was gone I cried in the anguish of impending bankruptcy, 'I wish to goodness I had it!' whereupon he immediately compelled me to accept his check for a hundred pounds, of which, as I have shown you, alas, only six pounds twelve and eightpence remains."

On leaving Mr. Dacre I took a hansom to a café on Regent Street which is a passable imitation of similar places of refreshment in Paris. There, calling for a cup of black coffee, I sat down to think. The clew of the silver spoons! He had laughingly suggested that I should take by the shoulders the first man I met, and ask him what the story of the silver spoons was. This course naturally struck me as absurd, and he doubtless intended it to seem absurd. Nevertheless, it contained a hint. I must ask somebody, and that the right person, to tell me the tale of the silver spoons.

Under the influence of the black coffee I reasoned it out in this way: On the night of the twenty-third some one of the six guests there present stole a hundred pounds, but Dacre had said that one of the actors in the silver spoon episode was the actual thief. That person, then, must have been one of Mr. Gibbes' guests at the dinner of the twenty-third. Probably two of the guests were the participators in the silver spoon comedy, but, be that as it may, it followed that one, at least, of the men around Mr. Gibbes' table knew the episode of the silver spoons. Perhaps Bentham Gibbes himself was cognizant of it. It followed, therefore, that the easiest plan was to question each of the men who partook of that dinner. Yet if only one knew about the spoons that one must also have some idea that these spoons formed the clew which attached him to the crime of the twenty-third, in which case he was little likely to divulge what he knew, and that to an entire stranger. Of course, I might go to Dacre himself and demand the story of the silver spoons, but this would be a confession of failure on my part, and I rather dreaded Lionel Dacre's hearty laughter when I admitted that the mystery was too much for me. Besides this, I was very well aware of the young man's kindly intentions toward me. He wished me to unravel the coil myself, and so I determined not to go to him except as a last resource.

I resolved to begin with Mr. Gibbes, and, finishing my coffee, got again into a hansom and drove back to the Temple. I found Mr. Gibbes in his room, and, after greeting me, his first inquiry was about the case.

"How are you getting on?" he asked.

"I think I'm getting on fairly well," I replied, "and expect to finish in a day or two if you will kindly tell me the story of the silver spoons."

"The silver spoons?" he echoed, quite evidently not understanding me.

"There happened an incident in which two men were engaged, and this incident related to a pair of silver spoons. I want to get the particulars of that."

"I haven't the slightest idea what you are talking about," replied Gibbes, thoroughly bewildered. "You will have to be more definite, I fear, if you are to get any help from me."

"I cannot be more definite, because I have already told you all I know."

"What bearing has all this on our own case?"

"I was informed that if I got hold of the clew of the silver spoons I should be in a fair way of settling our case."

"Who told you that?"

"Mr. Lionel Dacre."

"Oh, does Dacre refer to his own conjuring?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. What was his conjuring?"

"A very clever trick he did one night at dinner here about two months ago."

"Had it anything to do with silver spoons?"

"Well, it was silver spoons or silver forks, or something of that kind. I had entirely forgotten the incident. So far as I recollect at the moment there was a sleight-of-hand man of great expertness in one of the music-halls, and the talk turned upon him. Then Dacre said the tricks he did were easy, and, holding up a spoon or a fork, I don't remember which, he asserted his ability to make it disappear before our eyes, to be found afterward in the clothing of some one there present. Several offered to make him a bet that he could do nothing of the kind, but he said he would bet with no one but Innes, who sat opposite him. Innes, with some reluctance, accepted the bet, and then Dacre, with a great show of the usual conjuror's gesticulations, spread forth his empty hands, and said we should find the spoon in Innes' pocket, and there, sure enough, it was. It was a clever trick, but we were never able to get him to repeat it."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Gibbes; I think I see daylight now."

"If you do you are cleverer than I by a long chalk," cried Bentham Gibbes as I took my departure.

I went directly downstairs and knocked at Mr. Dacre's door once more. He opened the door himself, his man not yet having returned.

"Ah, Monsieur," he cried, "back already? You don't mean to tell me you have so soon got to the bottom of the silver spoon entanglement?"

"I think I have, Mr. Dacre. You were sitting at dinner opposite Mr. Vincent Innes. You saw him conceal a silver spoon in his pocket. You probably waited for some time to understand what he meant by this, and, as he did not return the spoon to its place, you proposed a conjuring trick, made the bet with him, and thus the spoon was returned to the table."

"Excellent, excellent, Monsieur; that is very nearly what occurred, except that I acted at once. I had had experiences with Mr. Vincent Innes before. Never did he come to these rooms without my missing some little trinket after he was gone. I am not a man of many possessions, while Mr. Innes is a very rich person, and so if anything is taken I have little

(Concluded on Page 18)

"MR. DACRE," I SAID, "MY DUTY IS TO FIND THE CRIMINAL"

Weaknesses of British Business Methods—By M. Martin Kallman

THE business supremacy of Great Britain is a first and final article of faith on the part of every loyal subject of King Edward. His assumption of the commercial dominance of England is as fundamental as his love of cricket; he is born to it as certainly as he is to the taste for tea. But recently his complacency has been considerably jolted by the "American inroads," by the conquests of the commercial traveler from "The States." As a result, some of the most progressive of English houses have broken their shell of conservatism to the extent of raising the question: "Are there not weaknesses in our business methods which have given the aggressive American an opening in the field of trade that we have seen slowly slipping away from us?"

This awakening to declining supremacy and the idea of looking for the cause of that decline in methods of doing business rather than in conditions of trade has caused several of the more wide-awake British houses to secure the services of experts who have devoted years of study to the systematizing of American business houses. Naturally a man called to England for this purpose enjoys peculiar opportunities for the study of British methods of transacting business. The observations made during a year of this kind of work disclose many things which the American merchant should understand in order to realize the advantage that he holds in the increasing commercial competition between Great Britain and the United States.

If the English merchant could realize the serious handicap under which he works the American would find in him a far more formidable adversary; and by the same token, if the tradesmen of the United States were more alive to the weaknesses of business methods in Great Britain they would be able to make their advantages doubly valuable.

Too Much Afternoon Tea

TIME is the commodity wasted most in British business houses. The attitude of the English man of business, from the "junior" clerk to the managing director, seems to be that of seeing how little time he can spend in actual work and how much he can spend in sports, pleasures and the intermissions of business. He works to live instead of living to work.

An instance of this lack of economy in time and labor is found in the common practice in English offices of serving afternoon tea. And in many instances this interruption to steady and consecutive application to business is permitted in the forenoon as well as in the afternoon. Though some houses are able to cut this daily stoppage of work down to an average of ten minutes, in most cases it requires fifteen to thirty minutes.

The completeness with which this practice disorganizes concentration of thought and dissipates the results of steady, uninterrupted application was impressed upon me by an incident which occurred in an English house that I was serving. I had begun an examination of the work that each clerk had handled the day previous, to learn the exact effects on the day's work of the afternoon tea intermission.

A single one of the results disclosed by that investigation is sufficient to illustrate the effects of the system. On the desk of one of the clerks I found an invoice and a draft on a customer in a foreign port. The mail steamer had sailed the day previous and the next sailing was two weeks later.

"Why didn't you get this off yesterday?" I asked the clerk.

"You see, sir," he complacently replied, "tea was served before the invoice was completed, and there was still the draft to make out."

"But you knew that if you didn't stop for tea you could easily finish the two documents and get them into the outgoing mail, while if you failed to do so the letter could not be forwarded for two weeks?"

"Yes, sir—but we always stop for tea; it's the regular thing here, and so——"

"And so," I interrupted, "you deliberately allowed your tea to delay the collection of a very considerable sum of money for at least two weeks?"

"But," he persisted, "everything stops when tea is served over here."

And he was right. Serving tea in the office of the English business man is as effective a signal for the dropping of all work as is the six o'clock whistle in the American factory.

More Holidays than Working Days

THOUGH the clerk is expected to report for duty at nine o'clock or nine-thirty in the morning, according to the individual rules of the house in which he works, it is generally thirty minutes to an hour later before he actually gets down

THE ARRAY OF REGULAR HOLIDAYS IS INCREASED BY THE ALLOWANCE OF "WEEK ENDS"

to business at his desk. It is interesting to think, in this connection, what would happen in a representative American office if the hour of 10:30 arrived before the force of clerks had reported for duty and really entered upon the day's work.

Another great waste of time and interruption to business arises from the astonishing list of holidays which are observed by the British business public. Full holidays are so frequent that a calendar marked with them seems to be afflicted with a severe case of measles. This array of regular holidays is increased by the allowance of "week ends." Altogether, the American who goes to London with the idea of dispatching business soon becomes so exasperated by this plague of holidays that he is tempted either to give up his mission or employ a lawyer to determine for him the days on which the English office is open for business.

There are many other features of the "help" question which are weighty handicaps upon the English merchant. Perhaps the most fundamental of these is the general—almost total—lack of ambition on the part of those who do clerical and similar kinds of work. Salaries for this class of labor are very small at the start, and promotion, as a general thing, is a slow and difficult process. Perhaps the average pay of office help is $7 a week, and it may be less than that. Certainly it is very low, and it is not too much to say that many an American office boy gets a salary as large as that received by any of thousands of English clerks of mature years, of experience and of family responsibilities.

As to the future, the outlook of the English office man is far from inspiring. Long established custom decrees that the principal standard of promotion is length of service. It would not be fair to say that the quality and quantity of work a man does count for nothing in the matter of promotion; but they count for so little, in comparison with the consideration they receive by American employers, that the result is likely to kill off all ambition.

The Social Value of the Frock Coat

IT IS a common saying in business houses of the United States that every clerk expects some day to own his employer's interest or a substantial part of it. In England the wildest dream of the representative clerk is to put aside enough from his earnings—or from his winnings in sporting ventures—to secure him an annuity of $1000 a year. He figures that he could retire on this and lead the life of a gentleman of leisure. And those who attain this pinnacle of prosperity very promptly quit work.

A very large number of recruits to the army of clerks are attracted by the social or class standing which the frock coat of the office man assures them. The prosperous machinist, engineer or expert workman of any kind is naturally ambitious to give his son a higher social rank than he himself has enjoyed. Consequently, he secures a position for the son in an office, agreeing that the lad is to work one, two or possibly three years without pay. But, in addition to giving the labor of the boy or young man for this time, the ambitious father also pays a cash premium for the privilege. He gets his compensation in seeing the son clothed in the dignity of the frock coat and in knowing that the lad has been lifted to a little higher plane in the social scale.

Inevitably the securing of positions in this manner leaves out of the question, to a very great extent, considerations of the lad's fitness for the place. Of course, the young man appreciates that his place has been "procured," that he is comparatively secure in it, and that he will probably remain a clerk to the end of his working days. Therefore, he is not put upon his mettle and does not, ordinarily, exert himself to "eat up work" as the self-dependent, self-reliant and keenly ambitious American boy does—the boy who expects to go to the top of the business before he quits. By the system under which he works, with its red tape and arbitrary traditions, he is robbed of larger hopes for the future. As a natural and inevitable consequence he settles down to take things as easy as he can, to get as much pleasure day by day "on the outside" as he may, and to centre all his interest, his expectations and his life outside the office and its business.

But he does not look to the outside for his pleasures alone. About the only opportunity he can see of getting ahead financially, of securing a little competency, of making a "stake" that will enable him to buy the coveted annuity, is by winnings on the races or some other kind of sport. The sporting spirit is almost universal in England and, for the reason I have suggested, has a tremendously strong hold upon the "black frock" contingent. Gambling is not under the social disfavor in Great Britain that rests upon it here; consequently, it is not so difficult for the clerk to try to better his fortunes by this doubtful means. To realize the extent of the interest that clerks and business employees take in races, sports, games and gambling one has only to ride in the cars used by this class of labor. Almost the entire conversation overheard is devoted to sports; business is practically never mentioned. Not only are sporting subjects the main topic of conversation among clerks outside of the office but inside as well, and appear to be the chief interest of all grades of office help from the youngest "juniors" to the venerable veterans who are kept in their places, under the English system, when, in many cases, it would be more profitable for their employers to pension them into retirement.

The Factor of Personal Habits

ANOTHER thing that seriously impairs the working power of the average English employee is the excessive use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages. Of course, there are many individual cases where this criticism does not apply; but speaking broadly it is by no means too severe. From the moment he has breakfasted (if not before) until he retires at night the average English business employee smokes constantly save when actually at work. And he smokes at his work, too, unless prohibited from so doing. Then, as a general thing, he is a steady drinker and pays frequent visits to the convenient public houses in the hours when he is outside of his office. True, his drinking may be mainly confined to malt liquors; but the fact remains, and is apparent to any observant American, that this general and excessive tobacco using and drinking tends to stupefy and becloud his mind to an extent sufficient to interfere with his usefulness as an employee. He lacks the snap, "ginger" and alertness of the average American employee, and this defect is no doubt largely due to his personal habits.

Before discussing the object of English office help a word should be said about the employment of women and girls. There is quite a perceptible change in this particular, and the "lady clerk" is considerably in evidence. That this departure is an improvement is by no means certain. There are many things to indicate that it is not a success. One employer said to me: "All our young ladies are ladies, socially." And right here is the trouble, for their training, traditions and home habits are at variance with the practical working demands of an office. They are too decidedly "genteel" to be thoroughly and uniformly useful. These young ladies dress in a manner unsuitable for the office, and what is more important, they think as unsuitably as they dress. Generally speaking, they seek office work as a means of increasing their fund of "pin money" and to allow them to

dress and live more expensively than they could without this additional income. But their thoughts are in their social life and not in their office work — and this, I think, to an extent not general among women in American offices. There is a class of English girls shut out from these positions because of deficient social standing — girls who would make more efficient workers than those who seek "genteel" employment in order to increase their supply of pin money rather than from the necessity of independent self-support.

English methods of bookkeeping and accounting are elaborate and cumbersome to the last degree. They are apparently devised without any attempt to economize in labor. The rule seems to be that, because the records of a business transaction have been kept in a certain way they must always be kept that way. Change in office system has a terror for the average English accountant that is seldom found in an American house. This method involves needless duplication of labor at almost every turn, and duplication of accounting processes always means multiplication of opportunities for mistakes — and of mistakes themselves.

It is hardly beyond the mark to say that there is scarcely a modern device in the way of business system equipment that is employed in the offices of the English manufacturing and mercantile houses. Let me illustrate this by saying that if there is a single adequate and thoroughly up-to-date "follow-up system" in practical use in any London business house outside of the branch offices of American concerns and those that have been very recently installed by men from "The States," I do not know of it.

All attempts at "checking" systems are decidedly crude and ineffective. In one very large house, for example, the manager suspected a small leakage. It was discovered that the supply of postage stamps was in the keeping of young lads. The aggregate of stamps handled by these boys was very large and the means of detecting a leakage in the disbursement of them was so inefficient that, to all practical purposes, the lads were left to their honor on that score. Considering that these boys received little or nothing in the way of wages, that they were constantly in an atmosphere of talk about "winnings," and that stamps are accepted on deposit in London, being almost as negotiable as Bank of England notes, it is not strange that the youngsters were tempted to a systematic course of filching from the stamp drawers.

A clerk of mature years and acting under a substantial bond was put in charge of the stamps. Then a simple but effective plan involving an accurate check upon his disbursements was mapped out for him to follow. The result was that this house stopped a chronic leakage.

The Difficulty of Getting an Audience

IN THE matter of getting and holding trade the English merchant stands in his own light in many particulars, but notably in the manner in which he hedges himself about with "buffers," red tape and other impediments to the quick transaction of business. For a stranger to secure an *immediate* audience with an executive of an English business house is almost unheard of — in fact, one hardly stretches the truth in saying that an immediate audience is an unknown quantity in the transaction of business on the "Little Island." There must be a preliminary exchange of notes before the stranger can get into the presence of the man he wishes to meet — and that applies with comparatively little regard to how urgent his mission may be. A stranger having any reasonable excuse for meeting the president of a great railroad system in the United States could see that official, transact his business and go his way in a fraction of the time ordinarily required to pave the way to an engagement with the head of a small English merchandizing house.

Not only is this practice peculiarly exasperating to the hustling American who has gone to England, with limited time at his command, but it is expensive — and the expense finally comes back upon the Englishman. He is the loser in the end, for he transacts far less business than he would if he were as accessible as the average American man of affairs. The factotum known as the Secretary is the especial thorn in the flesh to the man from "The States," who is attempting to put through a schedule of English business and get back to America with a reasonable economy of time and money.

This man acts as a "buffer" between him and the man he wishes to see wherever he may go, and does more to hinder the free and expeditious transaction of business than any other one thing. If the English man of business would make himself reasonably accessible and use his Secretary to facilitate instead of to block the transaction of affairs with those who have a legitimate right to get into the "head office" he would correct one of the worst faults of British business practice.

The Lack of Standard Prices

THE lack of fixed and standard prices is another feature of English business methods that comes as a surprise to the American and works great harm to the British merchant. This applies to the retail as well as the wholesale trade. A man goes into a London store, let us say, to buy a steamer rug. While he is making his selection he overhears the conversation between an English customer and a clerk — which consists of a gradual diminishing of the price asked and a corresponding increase of the price offered, until a bargain is finally struck. Then the American tries this process of "dickering" — with the result that he finally secures the rug at a much less price than was originally asked for it. He may have bought the article below its real market value, but he is not at all sure of it and he is harassed with suspicion that probably he has paid altogether too dearly.

There are many particulars in which the English merchant is heavily handicapped by law as well as by tradition. The laws governing real estate make it very difficult, not to say impossible, for the large merchant or jobber to put up a thoroughly modern building designed to accommodate his business and to facilitate its discharge with the greatest possible economy and convenience. Freehold property is practically unknown, and the conditions governing the use of leased property are so complicated, peculiar and restrictive that anything like an economical use of leased property seems out of the question, at least from an American viewpoint. I know of one enterprising and progressive retail merchant who leased four or five adjacent buildings and then connected them by putting doors through the walls. Promptly the owner of the property served notice that the walls must be restored to the precise condition in which the renter had found them. He was alive to the advantage of conducting his entire business practically under one roof and did not propose to give up without a fight. Then, too, he was sure that the property was not injured, but was really rendered more valuable by the alterations he had made. On his refusal to comply with the owner's demand he was arrested. At the close of a long and expensive suit at law he was compelled to take out every improvement he had made and put the buildings in the exact conditions they were in when the lease was executed. Many merchants have their principal departments housed in as many different buildings. Frequently these are several doors from each other and sometimes on different streets.

Another phase of the building laws which inflicts great hardship is that relating to "obstructing the view." This is enforced to such an absurd extreme that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that if a proposed building would interfere with the view of a proprietor whose house was half a mile distant he could, by appeal to the courts, kill the building project.

Perhaps the most absurd incident illustrating the conservatism of the English landlord that has come under my observation is the following: An American who had come into the proprietorship of a large English manufacturing business secured a 99-year lease on a block of real estate on which were a few small and comparatively worthless buildings. He proposed to remove these and put upon the property a building costing several hundred thousand dollars. The proprietor of the land refused to permit this — which is to say that he would not consider the acceptance, at the expiration of the lease, of the huge and costly modern building in the place of the old ones costing only a fraction of the new one. And this was not because the old buildings had any especial historic or sentimental associations.

Still another serious handicap from which the British jobber and retailer suffer is the carrying system by which they get their goods. The merchant contracts with a company of carriers to deliver so many pounds or hundredweight of goods to him daily.

If he buys a shipment of goods which, delivered at one time, would be in excess of the daily weight contracted for, the shipment must be split up and its delivery spread over two or more days. This entails extra expense in packing and extra labor in handling, as well as delay. Again, the railroads do not furnish the jobber or the manufacturer with anything approaching the facilities for shipping that are universal in America. Railroad spurs, switches and sidings for the convenience of large plants are rare in England and the transportation of freight there is a slow and tedious process. The charges, also, are so regulated that a jobber is greatly restricted in the territory of his operations. Practically the only way in which he is able to do business in several important cities is to maintain in each a large and expensive branch establishment.

American manufacturers feel that labor conditions are very burdensome, but they have many advantages over their English competitors in this respect. The introduction of new and improved machinery in England is a difficult matter to accomplish, owing to the severe limitations upon production imposed by the labor unions, which are very strong there. In many cases the unions have been able to dictate to the manufacturer putting in improved machinery that the production, per man employed, shall not be greater than under old conditions.

Advertising in England is crude and undeveloped compared with the scientific manner in which it is handled in the United States. With a few notable exceptions the advertisements of English houses are stiff, formal and ineffective. But the weakness does not stop with the advertisement itself. When it comes to harvesting the fruits of an advertising campaign in an intelligent and systematic way the English house is almost helpless. The results of publicity are neglected in a way that would astonish the management of a well-organized American concern.

A Universal Recoil from Improved Methods

WHEN the matter of improved accounting methods is mentioned to the English business man he instinctively recoils and intimates that a representative of one of the great chartered accounting companies is in control of that branch of the business. At first the visiting American is inclined to be awed by this, but after he has witnessed a complete audit conducted by the "chartered company" he has a less exalted opinion of the system. Why? Because the details of this important work are largely done by boys and "juniors" who are manifestly incapable of doing more than perfunctory checking. The American accountant who has any claim to the title of expert realizes that he must come personally into contact with the books and records themselves if he would give any real return for his fee. And when it comes to the intelligent *analysis* of the conditions revealed by an audit those who actually handle the work in English houses, so far as my observation goes, are hopelessly incapable. This may appear severe and unkind, but any American of thorough experience in this line who will study the matter at first hand will, I am sure, sustain this judgment.

Altogether the most alert, progressive and receptive influence in England, so far as the improvement of business methods is concerned, is to be found in the public press. The papers are alive to the fact that the "American Invasion" is a "condition, not a theory," and that the business men of England must bestir themselves and be willing to forsake tradition and precedent — even to the unwelcome extent of learning "Yankee methods" — in the effort to keep place and hold position in the commercial contest.

SERVING TEA IS AS EFFECTIVE A SIGNAL FOR STOPPING WORK AS THE SIX O'CLOCK WHISTLE

"BUT," HE PERSISTED, "EVERYTHING STOPS WHEN TEA IS SERVED, OVER HERE"

Love and the Locksmiths

By JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

Author of Cap'n Eri

"GOOD-BY, MOTHER," SHE SAID

MRS. BILBERRY dropped the Cape Cod Item into her lap and glanced up at the clock.

"My land!" she exclaimed, "it's most three now and he'll be here any minute. And I don't b'lieve 'Mena's changed her dress nor nothin'. 'Mena! Al-me-na!"

She called the name with a shrill rising inflection, almost as if she was trying to sing it. But she wasn't; there was no music in Mrs. Bilberry's nature.

The calling proved fruitless, and the lady slid the paper from her very sharp knees to a neighboring chair. Then, with a countenance upon which was spreading a look suggestive of rapidly growing suspicion, she rose and tiptoed through the house—dining-room, sitting-room, parlor and, at last, the black and gloomy front hall. The front door was the least bit ajar. Mrs. Bilberry's suspicion changed to settled conviction. She opened the door a trifle more and peeped out.

Leaning over the front gate was a young woman engaged in a very confidential chat with a young man. A horse, harnessed to a light wagon, was nervously nibbling the lower leaves of a tree on the other side of the road. Lettered on the wagon were the words, "ALPHEUS PEAKE, WELLMOUTH. AGENT FOR THE HOME COMFORT SEWING-MACHINE." There was a crated sewing-machine in the back part of the wagon.

Mrs. Bilberry shot down the path like a cyclone in calico.

"Almena Bilberry!" she exclaimed angrily. "Walk into that house this minute. The idea! After all I've told you, standin' out here talkin' to a—a——"

"Good-afternoon, Mrs. Bilberry," said the young man serenely. "Nice, season'ble spell of weather we're havin'."

His only answer was a glare that should have withered him in his tracks. It didn't, however, maybe because it takes a good deal to wither a sewing-machine agent. Mrs. Bilberry continued to address the young woman.

"Well, miss," she snorted, "do you hear me? Are you goin' to walk into that house, or ain't you?"

Miss Almena's reply was very irrelevant. "Mother," she said, "I do wish you wouldn't wear that calico dress in the afternoon. It's the homeliest pattern I ever saw, besides being as old as Methuselah. If you must wear calico gowns you might at least make yourself a new one."

"Make yourself a new one! And me slavin' from mornin' to night, with a stepdarter too lazy to do anything but gad around with good-for-nothin's. Lots of time I git to set down and sew. Why——"

"Now, that's just what I've been tellin' you for the last two years, Mrs. Bilberry," broke in the suave Mr. Peake. "What you need is one of our light-runnin', chain-stitch Home Comforts. Nickel-plated upper works, self-oilin' shafts, woodwork solid, selected oak, natural finish, all the attachments, and sold on easy terms. No fam'ly complete without one. Folks that's usin' 'em say they wouldn't——"

"Be still, you—you Poll parrot!" interrupted the lady addressed. "Don't you say another imperdent word to me. Almena Bilberry, you go into that house. Don't you know that Jethro Nickerson—a man with money, not a pauper talkin'-machine—is comin' all the way from Orham on purpose to see you, and here you be with your hair not combed nor nothin'."

Almena flushed, and put her hand to the slandered hair.

"It *is* combed," she protested. "Besides," with a toss of the head, "I don't want to see Jethro Nickerson. If you think so much of him why don't you entertain him yourself? He's a good deal nearer your age."

Just what answer her stepmother might have made to this remark is uncertain, for the sound of wheels and horses' hoofs approaching around the bend of the road caused her to exclaim excitedly, "There, what did I tell you? He's a-comin' now. Now p'r'aps you'll wish you'd minded me! Why, how do you do, Mr. Nickerson? Drive right into the yard, won't you? Almena was jest wonderin' where you was."

Mr. Nickerson pulled up his lean horse and lifted his hat in an awkward bow. Then he took out a figured handkerchief and mopped his bald head.

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Bilberry," he exclaimed. "How d'ye do, 'Mena? Hello, Alph'us."

"How are you, Jethro?" inquired Mr. Peake cheerfully. "Come all the way from Orham? Pretty long ride for a feller as old as you are, ain't it?"

Mr. Nickerson turned very red. "I guess not," he said stiffly.

"Oh, all right. Want me to help you out of the buggy? No? Well, I must be goin'. Better think about that sewin'-machine, Mrs. Bilberry. Good-by, Jethro; look out and don't get cold drivin' home. Rheumatism's the dickens when it gets hold of old folks. Good-by, 'Mena; see you later."

"Stop on your way back to-morrow, won't you, Al?" said Almena sweetly.

"Sure!" Mr. Peake waved a farewell, cracked his whip, and disappeared with a flurry and much dust. Mr. Nickerson looked as if he wanted to say something, but mopped his forehead instead.

"Come right in, Mr. Nickerson," purred Mrs. Bilberry. "Eben'll look after your horse. Eben! Eb-en! Drat that everlastin'—oh! here he is!"

Eben, the hired man—or boy—a long-legged, overgrown youth with a freckled face, came yawning from the barn and led the lean horse into that building, while the rest of the party entered the house. Jethro, upon urgent invitation of Mrs. Bilberry, seated himself in the armchair. Almena, serenely unconscious of his presence, stood by the window, looking out and humming a revival hymn.

"'Mena!" snapped her mother, "why don't you say somethin' to Mr. Nickerson, after he's come all this ways to see you?"

"I didn't ask him to come," was the provoking answer.

"Now, 'Mena——" began Jethro, but the young lady interrupted him.

"Mother," she said, "we might just as well settle this one time as another; and Mr. Nickerson may as well understand it, too. I'm engaged to Alpheus, and I'm going to marry him. There!"

The effect of this bombshell was to stun Mr. Nickerson into speechlessness, but it took more than that to stun Mrs. Bilberry.

"Engaged!" she screamed. "Engaged to that—well, I snum! I never heard—— Guess I'll put my foot down on that quick enough."

"Then you'll have to take it up again, because I'm going to marry him."

"Marry *him!* The idea! And here's one of the most well-off men in Orham after you—a man that there's dozens of girls jest dyin' to git. Ain't that so, Mr. Nickerson?"

Thus appealed to, Jethro managed to summon up a little courage.

"That's so, 'Mena," he stammered. "They're after me all the time. I don't know what they see in me; it s'prises me sometimes, I declare."

"I should think it would," was the discouraging reply.

"Marry that cheeky pauper!" sneered the undaunted Mrs. Bilberry.

"He's not a pauper! He's doing real well, and, more than that, the New York folks he works for have offered him a fine position up in their Brockton store; and he's going to take it, and I'm going with him. We're going to be married right away, and you can't stop me, even if I have to run off. You're only my stepmother, anyway. I think you're just as mean as you can be. I'll never—never——"

The latter part of this declaration of war was interrupted by chokings and symptoms of hysterics, and it finished with a bang of the door as the young lady flounced out of the room. A moment later another, and muffled, bang told that she had retired to the privacy of her chamber.

A momentary silence followed this dramatic exit. Then Mr. Nickerson heaved a deep sigh and rose from his chair.

"'Tain't no use," he said resignedly, "I might's well give it up and go."

"Give it *up!*" Mrs. Bilberry's eyes fairly snapped. "I guess you won't give it up! S'pose I'm goin' to let that sass-box heave herself away jest because—— You set down, Jethro Nickerson; I want to talk to you."

The talk was a long one. It ended when the lady stepped to the door and called shrilly for Eben. He came, after a time, and stood before the pair, twirling his battered straw hat in his hands and uneasily shifting from one bare foot to the other.

"Eben," said Mrs. Bilberry patronizingly, "you've been a real good boy sence you've been here with me, and I've decided to give you another half-dollar a week."

Eben grinned broadly and intimated that he was "much obleeged."

"And Eben," said Jethro, "I've took quite a fancy to you, myself. Here's a quarter for you."

Eben pocketed the quarter.

"And now, Eben," his mistress went on, "seein' as you're goin' to git more pay, why, nat'rally, you'll be expected to do a little somethin' extry. Here's what I want you to do."

Eben listened with both his ears—and they were large ones—to the instructions that followed.

"Why, sartin, marm," he said, after Mrs. Bilberry had finished. "I'll 'tend to that, all right. He won't git a chance to talk to her, you jest bet on that."

The widow followed her guest to the door and stood by the side of the buggy as he climbed in.

"It'll be all right, Mr. Nickerson," she said. "Eben and me'll keep 'em apart until he's gone to take that Brockton job. After that he'll be out of the way and you'll be the only one. Don't you git discouraged."

The next afternoon Almena sat crocheting on the front stoop. The Bilberry house was situated on an unfrequented side road midway beween Orham and Harniss. The nearest neighbor was a good half-mile off. So, when the young lady heard the sound of wheels, she was fairly certain as to the identity of the driver, and walked briskly down the path. Eben, who had been seated in the shadow of the henhouse whittling at a long willow switch, rose and followed her.

Sure enough, the newcomer was Mr. Peake, and he wheeled his high-stepping nag into the bend by the front gate.

"Whoa!" he shouted. "Hello, 'Mena! 'Bout on time, ain't I?"

Before Miss Bilberry could reply Eben came running up.

"Hi! you, Al Peake!" he shouted. "You ain't wanted here. Git right along!"

The sewing-machine agent turned an uninterested face in the direction of the boy.

"Hello, Daddy Long-Legs!" he observed. "Run back out of the sun. Your ears'll get burnt and set your hair afire."

"I don't want any of your sass," sputtered the indignant youth. "You go right along."

"Eben!" commanded Almena, "go back to the barn."

"Sha'n't nuther," was the sullen reply. "Your ma says you ain't to talk to him, and you ain't goin' to."

"See here, Handsome!" exclaimed Alpheus, dropping the reins and preparing to get out of the wagon, "you're goin' to get your mother's pet into trouble. Go back to the barn, or I'll——"

The boy did not answer, but instead leaned over the fence and gave the horse a smart cut with the willow switch. The animal sprang into the air and started down the road at a gallop, his driver clinging to the seat with both hands and yelling commands and threats at the top of his voice. The rattle and the shouts died away.

"You—you—you——!" sputtered Miss Bilberry, turning with flashing eyes toward the offender. "What do you mean?"

"You've got to go in the house now," shouted the triumphant Eben. "Your ma said if you didn't I was to make you."

"I sha'n't do anything of the kind. You just wait till Mr. Peake comes back; he'll give it to you."

"Got to ketch me fust. You go in the house now, or else I'll pick you up and carry you. Your ma said so."

"I sha'n't stir a step."

"All right! I'm a-comin'."

Almena waited defiantly until he made a rush at her with outstretched arms; then she eluded him and, with her nose in the air, marched indignantly into the house. Eben retired to the roof of the henhouse, where he seated himself, and took from his pocket an instrument made of a forked stick, elastic bands and a small piece of leather. When the perspiring dealer in sewing-machines came in sight, piloting his nervous horse, he was greeted with this piece of advice:

"Hey, you old 'Home Comfort'! If you don't drive right along I'll lam your horse with this slingshot. Want to see how I can shoot? Then watch out!"

The pebble punctured Mr. Peake's derby hat. The horse jumped at the sound. Almena, leaning from her chamber window, shrieked in alarm.

"Oh, Al!" she screamed, "don't stop, for my sake. You'll be run away with. Go along for this once. Please do."

"You freckled-faced clothespin!" shouted the angry Alpheus; "I'll see to you later! Never mind, 'Mena, it'll be all right. I'll be back this way in a day or so."

He drove off, and Eben, from his perch on the henhouse, crowed in triumph.

An hour later, when Jethro Nickerson appeared, Mrs. Bilberry had a tale to tell of victory won. Almena was locked in her room and refused to come forth.

"It's all right," said Mrs. Bilberry, "so far as the daytime is concerned, but Eben sleeps in the barn nights, and I'm scared of that feller comin' 'round after dark and runnin' off with 'Mena. I'm an awful sound sleeper, and he could do it and I'd never know. I've been thinkin' that if we had a dog—a real savage watchdog—and could turn him loose in the yard nights, then we'd be all right. He wouldn't dare come then, or, if he did, the dog would make such a row 'twould wake everybody up. You don't know of a dog we could buy, do you?"

Mr. Nickerson pondered. "No," he said, "I don't. Besides, a dog from 'round here wouldn't be much good. Peake's been at all the houses in this part of the Cape, and the dogs know him. I might write my nephew up to Boston and have him send down one—a real terror."

"Don't write—telegraph; 'twill git him here sooner. Eben's goin' to drive over to Harniss. He'll take the telegram. Peake won't be back this way to-day."

A little later, Eben, seated in the Bilberry buggy and driving the ancient Bilberry horse, was jogging slowly along toward Harniss. He was just at the outskirts of that village when another equipage, approaching from behind, drew up beside his own, and a familiar voice said, "Hello, friend! I'm awful glad to see you, though 'tis kind of unexpected."

Eben was alarmed, but not demoralized. He hastily dropped the reins in the bottom of the buggy, put his foot on them, and jerked the "slingshot" from his pocket.

"Don't you touch me with that whip, Al Peake!" he shouted. "If you do I'll give your horse one that'll start him plumb to Provincetown. I mean it now."

Mr. Peake hesitated, laughed, and then put the whip back in the socket.

"Eben," he said, "you're no prize beauty, but you're smarter'n I thought you was. I won't touch you now; this wagon's just been painted, and I don't want it scarred up. A lickin' 'll keep."

"I'LL LAM YOUR HORSE WITH THIS SLINGSHOT"

But Eben, flushed with triumph, didn't intend to let his enemy off so easy.

"Ah, hadee!" he sneered, "you won't git the chance to lick me. And you won't come 'round our house no more, nuther. What d'ye s'pose I've got in my pocket?"

"A hole, I guess," was the calm reply.

"Aw, you're awful smart, ain't you? No, sir; we're goin' to have a dog. One of them kind of dogs that eats sewin'-machine folks."

"That so? Got him in your pocket?"

"No, I ain't got him in my pocket," mockingly. "But I've got a telegram message in my pocket. Wouldn't you like to have me read it to you, hey?"

"I shouldn't want you to strain yourself. Teacher at the East Harniss schoolhouse told me you had to leave school because you couldn't learn to read."

"That's a lie, and you know it. I can read better'n any old 'Home Comfort' critter. Listen now!" He took a sheet of notepaper from his pocket and laboriously spelt out the following message:

Samuel R. Nickerson, Merchants' Row, Boston, Massachusetts: Send me right away the best watchdog you can find. Savage bulldog best. Send bill.

JETHRO.

"There!" exclaimed the messenger, "that's read plain enough, ain't it?"

"Yes, that's plain enough. You're a great scholar, Eben. Goin' to send that message right off?"

"You bet you!"

"Well, all right. I've got to turn off here. By-by, Handsome. Don't forget I've got that lickin' up my sleeve."

"Aw, go on, you and your lickin'! Wait till that dog comes. Then you'll——"

There was a great deal more, but Mr. Peake didn't wait to hear it. He turned into a side road, drove slowly until the Bilberry buggy was out of sight, and then chirruped to his horse and started at full speed for the telegraph office. The operator was one of his most intimate friends.

Miss Bilberry did not condescend to leave her place of voluntary exile until the following morning. Supper the night before had not tempted her, but she graced the breakfast-table, disdainful and mute. That afternoon, much to every one's surprise, Mr. Peake appeared once more. Eben, who had not expected him, was in the barn, and before the energetic guardian could get his "slingshot" in working order it was too late.

The sewing-machine agent did not stop. He merely called to the lady of his heart, who was seated upon the stoop, "Catch, 'Mena!" and, tossing something white in her direction, drove swiftly by. What he threw was a letter wrapped about a stone. Eben made a dash for it, but Miss Bilberry was too quick for him, and, running into the house, locked herself in her room, at the window of which she shortly was to be seen reading the note with provoking deliberation. Her stepmother demanded to know the contents of the communication, but her demands were unheeded.

This was on Wednesday. On Friday the "watchdog" arrived. Mr. Nickerson drove into the yard on the afternoon of that day with a good-sized packing-box in the back of his wagon.

"Mrs. Bilberry!" he shouted. "He's come! I've got him."

The widow rushed out of the house, wiping her hands on her apron.

"You don't say!" she exclaimed, trying to peep between the slats of the box. "Does he look like a good one?"

Jethro climbed down from the seat before replying.

"He sartin does," he said. "Ain't done nothin' but growl and snarl all the way along. Guess he's asleep now, though. Here, you boy!" to Eben, who, for a wonder, was on hand, "help me lift this box out."

Eben laid violent hands upon the box, but took them off in a hurry as a sound like smothered thunder came from within.

"Nice doggie!" said Mr. Nickerson soothingly. "Nice old boy! Did he want to git out? Well, he shall."

Together, and holding the box carefully by the corners, they lifted it out of the wagon and deposited it on the ground. The growls continued.

"Put Mr. Nickerson's horse in the barn, Eben," commanded Mrs. Bilberry, "and bring out the hatchet. We'll have him out of here in a jiffy."

"He seems to be mighty savage, don't he?" observed Jethro with some apprehension.

"That's exactly what we want," replied the widow. "I wouldn't give two cents for a watchdog *anybody* could pet. Nice old feller!"

The "nice old feller" acknowledged the compliment with a blood-curdling snarl and a series of thumps against the top of the box. Almena came out of the house and, stooping down, peered between the slats.

"Gracious! what a brute!" she sniffed, and, marching back into the kitchen, closed the door behind her. Eben came running with the hatchet.

"Now, then," said Mrs. Bilberry, "pry off them boards and let him loose. I don't doubt the poor thing's 'most starved to death."

ENGAGED IN A VERY CONFIDENTIAL CHAT WITH A YOUNG MAN

At the first blow from the hatchet the growls and snarls redoubled. The dog seemed even more anxious to be free than his new owners were to have him.

"Gosh all hemlock!" exclaimed Eben. "I dunno's I want to git them slats off, after all."

"The idea!" exclaimed the lady, backing away in the direction of the kitchen. "Don't be sech a coward. 'Fraid of a little dog! Great big boy like you!"

"That's so, Eben!" remarked Mr. Nickerson, withdrawing farther on his side. "Go ahead and let the poor thing out. What d'ye s'pose you had your wages raised for?"

Thus admonished, Eben gingerly placed the edge of the hatchet beneath one of the widest boards and applied his weight to the handle. The nails came out and the board lifted a little. It lifted still more as the dog, discovering the opening, began to do some prison-breaking on his own account. Mrs. Bilberry pulled frantically at the latch of the kitchen door.

"'Mena!" she screamed, "let me in this minute! What on airth have you got this door locked for?"

Mr. Nickerson, who by this time had retreated until he stood beneath a small pear tree, again raised his voice in command.

"Knock that board off, Eben!" he shouted. "What are you waiting for? Scared again?"

But Eben was past caring for taunts. He dropped the hatchet and ran wildly in the direction of the henhouse.

"I don't need to knock nothin' off," he yelled. "He's a-comin' himself."

The snarls and growls grew louder. The board tilted back more and more. A big, crop-eared head, with a most perfect and apparent set of teeth, appeared through the opening. Mrs. Bilberry gave up trying to open the door, and, darting to the rain-barrel at the corner of the house, climbed upon it and from thence to the flat, tin roof of the woodshed. Jethro, with as much agility as he had ever possessed in his boyhood, scrambled into the lower branches of the little pear tree.

The dog got his forelegs and shoulders out of the box, and, with the nails scraping red-hot furrows along his back, pulled the rest of his body free. Then he went for Eben as the most convenient victim. That precocious youth had been standing by the henhouse, intending to climb upon its roof, but the dog didn't give him time. With a howl, as the brute dove at his legs, the boy went backward into the little building, pulling the door shut as he fell. An alarmed squawking told that he had disturbed the matronly repose of two or three setting hens.

The dog, with a yelp of disgusted disappointment, sniffed at the closed door, walked over and glanced up at the shed, and then took a short stroll beneath the pear tree. Apparently satisfied that his enemies were out of reach for the present, he retired to a strategical position from which he could watch each point of the triangle, and sat down.

"Nice old feller," coaxed Jethro from the little pear tree.

"Go home, you brute!" screamed Mrs. Bilberry from the shed.

The dog smiled. It was an expansive smile, and showed a great many white teeth and a foot or so of red tongue.

Eben's freckled face appeared framed in the tiny window under the roof of the henhouse. Then a sunburned paw

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Wealthy Indian Landlords

The Poncas are Farmers by Proxy on a Wholesale Scale

By PHILIP EASTMAN

WHEN Comes From War, looking from his teepee where he smoked his pipe in peace, saw the first plow sink its nose into the soil and turn the virgin prairie sod on the Ponca reservation in that part of the country once known as No Man's Land, but now Northern Oklahoma, he was enraged. He had watched the encroachment of the palefaces and civilization, and he had seen No Man's Land become the land of the white man, and his tribesmen forced to content themselves with a reservation, spacious indeed, but so small compared with the domain that once he roved. He had reconciled himself to the displacement of the roving herds of buffalo by mammoth droves of long-horned cattle. He had fought the white man, but now the swords were beaten into plowshares and the prairies left to him and to his tribe were being violated.

Comes From War armed himself with a double-barreled shotgun, mounted his pony, and rode straight to where the ground was being scarred by the plow. As he stopped his pony by the furrow a rabbit jumped up and darted away. The Indian fired one barrel and killed his game. Just then a second rabbit sped away. The plowman pointed to it, but Comes From War grunted and shook his head. One load he had left for the white man. Not a word was said, but the plowman understood. He left the furrow and rode with the Indian to the agency. There the agent explained to the Indian that the white man had leased the land from the Indian owners and he had a right to plow it and to plant it to crops. Comes From War understood, but he was not pleased to learn that the mighty Poncas had become the landlords of the palefaced tenants.

Comes From War, before he crossed the Great Divide, was to see a mighty farm of 70,000 acres developed by the tenants of his race, and to see the cultivator and the binder tilling the soil and gathering the grain from mammoth fields. More than that, he was yet to be compelled to acknowledge that his race of hunters and warriors who scorned labor, void of the glories of the chase and the battlefield, were to degenerate into civilians and farmers, and follow, in a lesser degree, the example of their white tenants.

It was in 1893 that the late George W. Miller, a Kentuckian who had journeyed West in the early days and who had driven one of the first herds of Texas long-horned cattle northward to graze and feed, started the first furrow ever turned in the Ponca reservation. He had played the cattle game for years, and that year he shipped 17,000 head of cattle to the Chicago stockyards and—lost. He saw, in the passing of the ranges to settlement, the end of the old cattle days. He knew the agricultural value of the lands in the Ponca reservation, which had never been broken. He leased several thousand acres belonging to the tribe for pasture and leased other lands from the individual owners for cultivation, and began plowing for wheat, corn and other crops, and established the 101 Ranch. It was then that Comes From War objected.

The ranchman at once began the development of a mammoth farm. He built barns and houses, and leased more land, and bought what the Indians had for sale, and the size and output increased annually. The chief product of the ranch is cattle, not the Texas variety, but graded cattle and Herefords. Under the new régime of cattle raising the leaks had to be stopped and, as in packing-houses, nothing should go to waste. Therefore the land must yield all that was needed, and great fields of corn for fattening steers, thousands of acres of wheat to furnish green winter pasture and straw for rough feed, and the threshed grain as a by-product, were planted. Kaffir corn and rye and alfalfa and oats were sown, and the reaper went into the fields and mowed thousands of tons of prairie hay for feed.

And the Poncas, who would not lower their dignity by labor, but who left the growing of the corn to the squaws, had, even in their meagre way, been aiding the white man in his agricultural pursuits, for the Poncas raised certain varieties of corn which the white tenants found to be productive to a degree far greater than many of the kinds raised by the American farmers. The 101 Ranch developed these varieties, raised them in large fields, named one variety "Squaw" in honor of the women who tilled it, and shipped thousands of bushels hundreds of miles away to be planted in other fields. Last year the 101 Ranch shipped 25,000 bushels of seed corn to Texas and twelve carloads to Kansas, Missouri and Illinois.

The 101 Ranch grew until it is now 22 miles long north and south and averages five miles in width, and contains 70,000 acres—nearly 110 square miles. Though in Western parlance it is termed a ranch, it is really a large farm with 18,000 acres plowed and planted annually, 5000 acres of hay land mowed every year, and the remainder in pasture. The Santa Fe Railway runs along the eastern border of the ranch, with three stations, Bliss, White Eagle and Red Rock, on the line within the length of the ranch. The greater part of the

TWENTY-ONE BINDERS IN THE SAME FIELD ON THE 101 RANCH

ranch is in the Ponca reservation, but the eastern end is across the line into the Otoe reservation.

For an average year the ranch produces 162,000 bushels of wheat for market and 12,000 bushels for seed, 140,000 bushels of corn to be fed to the ranch stock and 37,000 for seed, 1000 acres of kaffir corn for rough feed, 100 head of young mules, 9000 head of cattle pastured and 5000 more fattened and sold for beef, 2500 acres of rye planted for pasture, 2000 acres seeded to alfalfa, 10 acres of orchard set out, a 320-acre locust grove started to provide posts in the future for the 120 miles of fences, 100 acres of pecan trees started as an experiment. A 1200-acre watermelon patch is looked on as a side issue—although 50 carloads are sold—and every one for miles around has free melons, and what are left are fed to the 1000 hogs fattened and sold. The melons are the summer "treat" of the ranch to every one who wants to carry them away, even by the wagonload, and a sign says, "$5 fine for any one passing this patch and not taking a melon." A large watering-trough at the ranch house is kept full of melons during the season, for Ponca and American alike relish cool melons on hot Oklahoma days.

Preparations for the harvest on this 70,000-acre farm can be likened to the making ready of a battery of artillery to take the field. Forty-two binders and the 126 sets of harness and complement of 150 mules have to be in readiness for the attack. The 100 men to man the battery of binders, and to do the shocking, instead of knowing how to load and prime, must know how to keep the machines going and not be forced to desert them because some slight fault in the mechanism prevents the knot tier from working.

J. C. Miller is the colonel commanding, with George L. Miller and Z. T. Miller the majors, assisted by a full array of captain foremen. The men and mules from the outlying camps have been summoned to headquarters. The ammunition is a carload of binding twine which has been safely forded across the Salt Fork and kept as dry as powder.

TEEPEES OF THE PONCAS, SUMMER HOMES OF THE LANDLORDS OF THE 101

The 9000 acres of wheat lands have been sown to three varieties of wheat which will ripen in succession a week apart. The first to ripen will be the Frost-Proof May. In one hot day the final shade of yellow will have been imparted to the grain, and the next morning the order is given, and the battery of 42 binders moves off in a cloud of dust to the clanking of the trace chains.

The largest field contains 3000 acres and the distance around it is over nine miles. Twenty-one binders are assigned to this field. The attack is a movement in echelon. In making the first circuit of the field the binders, each cutting a six-foot swath, bind and deliver the grain from over 120 acres. The supporting column for the battery of binders is the "infantry" detachment, as the harvesters term the men who follow up and shock the grain.

"The clang of the Yankee reaper on Salisbury plain" was music to a homesick American poet, but the music of that one binder, in comparison with the 20 or the 42 at work on the 101, was as the music of a cottage organ compared to the volume of a four-manual pipe organ.

Too much time must not be lost in the marches to and from headquarters, so the 42 binders going to work in the morning cut through a smaller field of wheat lying between the larger fields and headquarters. Instead of the teams being unhitched from the binders and driven to and from the field without accomplishing any work, they draw the binders going out in the morning through this smaller field, again on the way to the stables for dinner, a third time returning from the noon respite, and the fourth time going to the stable when the day's work is over. In this manner, without extra time having been required, by crossing a field a half a mile wide four times during the day 60 acres have been harvested. In six days a field of 360 acres of wheat has been harvested and the teams have traveled no farther than was necessary in harvesting the larger fields.

The threshing follows immediately after the harvest. One day the binders are buzzing and clanking in a field, and the next day the five threshers and five traction engines are whirring and puffing, and 40 wagons are kept constantly on the move carrying the grain from the machines to the cars. There is always a rivalry among the wheat raisers to see who shall be the first to send wheat to Kansas City. This year the threshers went into the fields on the 101, June 20, and the same day four cars of wheat started by fast freight for Kansas City, and the next day the premium for the first shipment was awarded to the 101.

But the wheat harvest is not all that claims attention on the ranch, even in June, for the 2000 acres of corn has to be cultivated, alfalfa to be mowed, 14,000 head of cattle tended, 1400 hogs fed, 250 mules and 150 brood mares and 75 cow ponies stabled and cared for. The binders, wagons, plows, cultivators and other implements must be kept in repair, and two blacksmiths and three carpenters are kept constantly busy.

The 300 men have to be fed and housed. The vegetables, meat and flour are all products of the ranch. A herd of 25 dairy cows furnishes the milk and butter. A thousand chickens supply the tables with eggs. A beef a day is slaughtered. The gardener and his assistants, the dairy force and chicken-tender do nothing but see that the kitchens are supplied from their departments. Two men do nothing but repair the fences and make a circuit of them once a year.

Annually the hay from 5000 acres is cured for winter feed. From the first of July to November, 10 to 15 mowers are kept busy in the hay fields. During that time 4000 tons are put in piles of half a ton each in the fields, and salted down for winter. Besides this the 9000 acres of wheat afford green pasture during the winter. In the fall the corn-husking season begins, and for three months 150 men are kept busy. To carry on the work of the ranch 35 cultivators, 50 plows, 42 binders, 38 wagons, 15 mowing machines, and 5 threshers and 5 traction engines are used.

Following the harvesting of the wheat much of the wheat land is plowed and 1000 acres planted to kaffir corn and 2500 acres to rye. These fields will give green pasture for cattle 20 days in September, and after that the ground goes into wheat again.

There is a bit of local color left of the old-time cowboy days on the 101 Ranch, for cowboys are needed to care for the 14,000 head of cattle and to do the branding and roping and to break the horses. These cowboys, stationed at headquarters and at the four camps, are typical of their calling, and they do not lower themselves by mingling with the farm-hands and the harvesters. They are of another class.

To the small farmer who cultivates with quiet old Dobbin it would be a strange sight to see 15 or 20 or even more of the work mules used for harvesting and cultivating lariated and subdued before being hitched with more sedate mates; but such is the way on the ranch, for the young mules

HEADQUARTERS OF THE 101 RANCH. THERE ARE FOUR OUTLYING CAMPS

have to be broken. It would also be something new to the average farmer to see 250 work mules feeding in the same barn from the wagonload of hay and wagonload of shelled corn placed there each day as their share of the regular rations

The Poncas of the reservation are civilized, but not thoroughly weaned from the habits and customs of their ancestors, notwithstanding the example set before them. The majority of the younger generation are graduates of the Indian school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and other Indian schools, and they speak English and have adopted the methods and manners of the white man to a far greater degree than their fathers, who still talk the tribal tongue and who, though they may adopt the conventional trousers and hickory shirt, still cling to moccasins, blankets, headdress of a bright bandanna, long stemmed pipes, kinnikinnic and stolidity

The Ponca who seeks employment at the 101 Ranch is given the preference, and he may run a cultivator or binder, shock wheat or shuck corn as he chooses Those who work are found to be good, steady hands, and they often do more work than the average white farmhand, for they do not tire nor become leg weary, and they are full of stick to it iveness when once they set about anything in earnest Those who become farmhands are of the younger generation and are usually graduates of some Indian school. They have seen the white man work and earn money, and it looks easy to them

The Ponca who owns land may lease what he pleases so long as he retains 40 acres and makes some semblance of farming. Most of them take advantage of the opportunity to lease all but the amount they are compelled to keep Practically every Ponca family owns a good house and may enjoy all the pleasures of the white man's mode of living, but in the yard about the house there will probably be a teepee where the family will really find their greatest enjoyment in living as their fathers lived for generations uncounted before them

The proprietors of the 101 Ranch, the Miller boys, as they are known in Oklahoma, are the three sons of the founder of the ranch They carry on the place and keep friendly with their landlords Only the land of the estate of a deceased Indian can be bought, and so far the ranchmen own 4300 acres and lease the rest It is always necessary for the tenant to be on good terms with the landlord, but in this case the tenants have to be on good terms with Little White Buffalo Bull, No Ear, Yellow Bull Sits on the Hill, White Eagle, Little Dance, White Horse, Little Snake, Iron Thunder, Calls Him, Bear's Ear, and in all 150 landlords, and peculiar landlords at that. And to keep on good terms —for the Indian demands attention along with the contract price for the use of his land—the ranchmen hold open house for the Poncas whenever they wish to call, see that they get the first pick of the young ponies lend them reapers, binders, cultivators or anything they need in farming their 40 acres, and once or twice a year provide the tribe with the necessary properties for a sun dance or a buffalo hunt, or some other customary celebration of the tribe

Then it is the landlords have a chance to don their regalia and move over to a big pasture on the ranch, live in their teepees, eat the fatted beef provided for them, smoke and grunt and have a good time—at the expense of the tenants

Japan and Her Quickened Life

By Walter Russell Lambuth, M. D.

For Fifteen Years a Resident in the Far East

IT WAS Sir John Lubbock who gave utterance to the words "Great battles are really won before they are actually fought." In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 the victory of Germany, so swift and overwhelming, was achieved by forces that were wrought out in the schoolhouse and in the university. It was the character and qualification of the German soldier in the ranks as much as the military strategy of Von Moltke that won enduring fame for the German arms

In her terrific struggle with her huge antagonist in Manchuria it has not been otherwise with Japan The little Island Empire, just emerged from a feudal system which required absolute obedience, has been for a generation under further discipline and training, from the kindergarten up to the great University of Tokyo. The best war maps in the world are those which have been made by her own military engineers since the first capture of Port Arthur ten years ago Every foot of the Korean peninsula and of Manchuria has been triangulated and the height of every mountain range accurately measured. Nothing has been left to chance or to the fortunes of war. It is not a matter of astonishment, then, that Japanese artillerymen, whether upon the south bank of the Yalu at Wiju, or upon the hilltops of Kinchow, have trained their guns with such scientific precision. If there be any doubt about the process which has yielded such results let the would be skeptic make a careful examination of the Japanese educational exhibit at the St. Louis Exposition. When a nation just out of its swaddling clothes can show such figures one must acknowledge that tremendous forces are at work in the social and educational life of a nation. In 1873 only fifteen per cent. of the females in Japan could read and write in 1893 there were eighty seven per cent. In 1873 only forty per cent of the males could read and write, and in 1903 the number had grown to ninety-six per cent. From the educational and scientific standpoint these keen-eyed, clear-headed little islanders seem to be fully abreast of the twentieth century, into the arena of which they have leaped with a single bound

Japan has truly awakened to the consciousness of her power, and, with the restless activity which prevails among her young men, there is in some quarters no little uneasiness over the so-called "yellow peril" We are told that at the recent exposition in Osaka the emphasis was placed upon "guns and brains"; that the Engineering School of the Imperial University turned out 500 graduates last year, and many of these are being employed by the Chinese authorities, who have dismissed their European teachers and sought the leadership and counsel of those who are near akin to them by tradition and by blood. It is pointed out that drillmasters have been invited to China by the provincial governors to discipline their soldiers, and that in the Japanese army and navy, out of which these drillmasters have come, not one American or European is to be found

REPRESENTATIVE LANDLORDS OF THE 70,000 ACRE FARM

CORN AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN REACH A 1200-ACRE PATCH

The writer has had no fear of the "yellow peril" The leaders of the Empire of the Rising Sun—such men as Ito, Okuma, Inouye and others, with Mutsu-hito, the benevolent man, at their head—are far more peacefully inclined than Western nations have given them credit for. Their supreme desire has been to enter upon an industrial era that will enable Japan to manufacture and supply the goods which may enter the open door both in Korea and China To this policy she is as much committed as the United States, and is in full sympathy with the statesmanship of Secretary Hay Her present fight is for her life. Mr. Takahira, the Japanese Minister to Washington, has, in a recent magazine article, made this perfectly clear. The war into which the nation has been plunged is not one of aggression. Japan, though at present sweeping the sea and forcing the fighting on land, is acting on the defensive. She stands for the independence of Korea and the integrity of China. Ambitious to align herself with Western nations, she will no more take sides with the Mongolian in the future than she did during the Boxer movement, when her troops marched with the allied forces upon Peking

The influence of Christianity in the Japanese Empire is far greater than a casual observer would suppose. One writer has recently observed that Christianity is giving Japan her new ideals. Marquis Ito at one time asserted that a nation did not need a religion, and deliberately advised the elimination of all religious and moral instruction in the education of the youth of his country. He has recently shifted his position and declared that his people, who adopted the civilization of the West, must now seek for its foundation. Nor does the Marquis stand alone in his revised opinion. Baron Maejima, an ex-Cabinet officer of Japan, says of Christianity "No matter how large an army or navy we may have, unless we have righteousness at the foundation of our national existence we shall fall short of success"

I do not hesitate to say that we must rely upon religion for our highest welfare. And when I look about me and see on what religion we may best rely, I am convinced that the religion of Christ is the one most full of strength and of promise for the nation"

Nor is this mere theory. Last year, during the Osaka Exposition, in a hall just opposite the main entrance, lectures were given daily on Christianity. In this enterprise the Japanese took the initiative, and two hundred and fifty thousand out of the four million Japanese in attendance upon the fair heard the principles of Christianity set forth by their own countrymen. With open mindedness such as this there need be no fear

A President of the Lower House of the Imperial Diet, the late Mr Kataoka, was an officer in the Presbyterian Church. One of the judges of the Supreme Court is a Christian, widely known and recognized as such, while three out of the six admirals who have commanded battleships were of this faith - Admiral Togo recently gave utterance to the statement that during these terrible bombardments of Port Arthur he has realized that some unseen hand must have been protecting him and his men. It is hardly less remarkable that fifty out of the three hundred odd Japanese at the St Louis Exposition and eight out of the nine Aino or "hairy men" from the northern island of Yezo are Christians

THE EAGLE'S SHADOW

By James Branch Cabell

VI.

BILLY'S back was turned to the door as Margaret entered He was staring at a picture beside the mantel—a portrait of Frederick R. Woods—and his eyes, when he wheeled about, were wistful

Then, on a sudden, they lighted up as if they had caught fire from hers, and his adoration flaunted crimson banners in his cheeks, and his heart, I dare say, was a great blaze of happiness. He loved her, you see; when she entered a room it really made a difference to this absurd young man. He saw a great many lights, for instance, and heard music. And, accordingly, he laughed now in a very contented fashion

"I wasn't burglarizing," said he—"that is, not exactly I ought to have asked your permission, I suppose, before coming here, but I couldn't find you, and—and it was rather important. You see," Mr Woods continued, pointing to the great carved desk, "I happened to speak of this desk to the Colonel to-night. We—we were speaking of Uncle Fred's death, and I found out, quite by accident, that it hadn't been searched since then—that is, not thoroughly. There are secret drawers, you see; one here," and he touched the spring that threw it open, "and the other on this side. There is—there is nothing of importance in them; only receipted bills and such. The other drawer is inside that centre compartment, which is locked. The Colonel wouldn't come. He said it was all foolishness, and that he had a book he wanted to read. So he sent me after what he called my mare's nest. It isn't, you see—no, not quite, not quite," Mr. Woods murmured with an odd smile, and then laughed and added lamely: "I—I suppose I'm the only person who knew about it."

Mr. Woods' manner was a thought strange. He stammered a little in speaking; he laughed unnecessarily, and Margaret could see that his hands trembled. Taking him all in all, you would have sworn he was repressing some vital emotion But he did not seem unhappy—no, not exactly unhappy. He was with Margaret, you see.

"Oh, you beauty!" his meditations ran.

He had some excuse. In the soft, rosy twilight of the room—the study at Selwoode is paneled in very dark oak, and the doors and windows are screened with crimson hangings—her parti-colored red-and-yellow gown might have been a scrap of afterglow left over from an unusually fine sunset. In a word, Miss Hugonin was a very quaint and colorful and delectable figure as she came a little farther into the room Her eyes shone like blue stars and her hair shone—there must be pounds of it, Billy thought—and her very shoulders, plump, flawless, ineffable, shone with the glow of an errant cloud-tatter that is just past the track of dawn and is, therefore, neither pink nor white, but manages somehow to combine the best points of both colors.

HIS SHOULDERS HAD A PATHETIC DROOP, A LISTLESSNESS

"Ah, indeed?" said Miss Hugonin. Her tone imparted a surprising degree of chilliness to this simple remark.

"No," she went on, very formally; "this is not a private room; you owe me no apology for being here. Indeed, I am rather obliged to you, Mr. Woods, for none of us knew of these secret drawers. Here is the key to the central compartment, if you will be kind enough to point out the other one. Dear, dear!" Margaret concluded languidly, "all this is quite like a third-rate melodrama I haven't the least doubt you will discover a will in there in your favor, and be reinstated as the long-lost heir and all that sort of thing. How I resume that will be for me, though "

She was in a mood to be cruel to-night. She held out the keys to him in a disinterested fashion, and dropped them daintily into his outstretched palm, just as she might have given a coin to an unusually grimy mendicant. But the tips of her fingers grazed his hand

That did the mischief. Her least touch was enough to set every nerve in his body a-tingle

"Peggy!" he said hoarsely, as the keys jangled to the floor, Then Mr. Woods drew a little nearer to her and said, "Peggy, Peggy!" in a voice that trembled curiously, and appeared to have no intention of saying anything further.

Indeed, words would have seemed mere tautology to any one who could have seen his eyes. Margaret looked into them for a minute, and her own eyes fell before their blaze, and her heart—very foolishly—stood still for a breathing-space. Subsequently she recalled the fact that he was a fortune-hunter, and that she despised him, and also observed—to her surprise and indignation—that he was holding her hand and had apparently been doing so for some time. You may believe it that she withdrew that pink-and-white trifle angrily enough

"Pray don't be absurd, Mr. Woods," said she

Billy caught up the word. "Absurd!" he echoed; "yes, that describes what I've been pretty well, doesn't it, Peggy? I *was* absurd when I let you send me to the rightabout, four years ago. I realized that to-day the moment I saw you. I should have held on like the very grimmest death; I should have bullied you into marrying me, if necessary, and in spite of fifty Anstruthers. Oh, yes, I know that now. But I was only a boy then, Peggy, and so I let a boy's pride come between us. I know now there isn't any question of pride where you are concerned—not any question of pride, nor of any silly misunderstandings, nor of any uncle's wishes, nor of anything but just you, Peggy. It's just you that I care for now—just you "

"Ah!" Margaret cried, with a swift intake of the breath that was almost a sob. He had dared, after all; oh, it was shameless, sordid! And yet (she thought dimly), how dear that little quiver in his voice had been were it unplanned!—and how she could have loved this big, eager boy were he not the hypocrite she knew him!

She'd show him! But somehow—though it was manifestly what he deserved—she found she couldn't look him in the face while she did it

So she dropped her eyes to the floor and waited for a moment of tense silence. Then, "Am I to consider this a proposal, Mr. Woods?" she asked in muffled tones.

Billy stared. "Yes," said he gravely, after an interval.

"You see," she explained, still in the same dull voice, "you phrased it so vaguely I couldn't well be certain. You don't propose very well, Mr. Woods. I—I've had opportunities to become an authority on such matters, you see, since I've been rich. That makes a difference, doesn't it? A great many men are willing to marry me now who wouldn't have thought of such a thing, say—say four years ago. So I've had some experience. Oh, yes, three—three *persons* have offered to marry me for my money earlier in this very evening—before you did, Mr. Woods. And, really, I can't compliment you on your methods, Mr. Woods; they are a little vague, a little transparent, don't you think?"

"Peggy!" he cried, in a frightened whisper. He could not believe, you see, that the woman he loved was speaking.

And, for my part, I admit frankly that at this very point, if ever in her life, Margaret deserved a thorough shaking.

"Dear me," she airily observed, "I'm sure I've said nothing out of the way. I think it speaks very well for you that you're so fond of your old home—so anxious to regain it at *any* cost. It's quite touching, Mr. Woods."

She raised her eyes toward his. I dare say she was suffering as much as he. But women consider it a point of honor to smile when they stab; Margaret smiled with an innocence that would have seemed overdone in an angel.

Then, in an instant, she had the grace to be abjectly ashamed of herself. Billy's face had gone white. His mouth was set, masklike, and his breathing was a little perfunctory. It stung her, though, that he was not angry. He was sorry.

VERY PUZZLED, AND VERY EXCITED, AND VERY PENITENT

"I—I see," he said very carefully. "You think I—want the money. Yes—I see."

"And why not?" she queried pleasantly "Dear me, money's a very sensible thing to want, I'm sure. It makes a great difference, you know."

He looked down into her face for a moment. One might have sworn this detected fortune-hunter pitied her.

"Yes," he assented slowly; "it makes a difference—not a difference for the better, I'm afraid, Peggy."

Ensued a silence.

Then Margaret tossed her head. She was fast losing her composure. She would have given the world to retract what she had said, and, accordingly, she resolved to brazen it out

"You needn't look at me as if I were a convicted criminal," she said sharply. "I won't marry you, and there's an end of it."

"It isn't that I'm thinking of," said Mr. Woods with a grave smile. "You see, it takes me a little time to realize your honest opinion of me. I believe I understand now. You think me a very hopeless cad—that's about your real opinion, isn't it, Peggy? I didn't know that, you see. I thought you knew me better than that. You did once, Peggy; and—and I hoped you hadn't quite forgotten that time."

The allusion was ill-chosen.

"Oh, oh, *oh!*" she cried, gasping. "*You* to remind me of that time!—you, of all men! Haven't you a vestige of shame?—haven't you a rag of honor left? Oh, I didn't know there were such men in the world! And to think—to think ——" Margaret's glorious voice broke, and she wrung her hands helplessly.

Then, after a little, she raised her eyes to his and spoke without a trace of emotion. "To think," she said, and her voice was toneless now, "to think that I loved you! It's that that hurts, you know. For I loved you very dearly, Billy Woods—yes, I think I loved you quite as much as any woman can ever love a man. You were the first, you see, and girls—girls are very foolish about such things. I thought you were brave, and strong, and clean, and honest, and beautiful, and dear—oh, quite the best and dearest man in the world, I thought you, Billy Woods! That—that was queer, wasn't it?" she asked with a listless little shiver. "Yes, it was very queer. You didn't think of me in quite that way, did you? No, you—you thought I was well enough to amuse you for a while. I was well enough for a summer flirtation, wasn't I, Billy? But marriage—ah, no, you never thought of marriage then. You ran away when Uncle Fred suggested that. You refused point-blank—refused in this very room—didn't you, Billy? Ah, that—that hurt," Margaret ended with a faint smile. "Yes, it—hurt."

Billy Woods raised a protesting hand, as though to speak, but afterward he drew a deep, tremulous breath and bit his lip and was silent.

She had spoken very quietly, very simply, very like a tired child; now her voice lifted. "But you've hurt me more to-night," she said equably—"to-night when you've come cringing back to me—to me, whom you'd have none of when I was poor. I'm rich now, though. That makes a difference, doesn't it, Billy? You're willing to whistle back the girl's love you flung away once—yes, quite willing. But can't you understand how much it must hurt me to think I ever loved you?" Margaret asked very gently.

She wanted him to understand. She wanted him to be ashamed. She prayed that he might be just a little, little bit ashamed, that she might be able to forgive him.

But he stood silent, bending puzzled brows toward her.

"Can't you understand, Billy?" she pleaded softly. "I can't help seeing what a cur you are. I must hate you, Billy—of course, I must," she insisted, very gently, as though arguing the matter with herself; then suddenly she sobbed and wrung her hands in anguish. "Oh, I can't, I can't!" she wailed. "God help me, I can't hate you, even though I know you for what you are!"

His arms lifted a little; and in a flash Margaret knew that what she most wanted in all the world was to have them close about her, and then to lay her head upon his shoulder and cry contentedly. Oh, she did want to forgive him! If he had lost all sense of shame, why could he not lie to her? Surely, he could, at least, lie. And, oh, how gladly she would believe!—only the tiniest, the flimsiest fiction her eyes craved of him.

But he merely said, "I see—I see," very slowly, and then smiled. "We'll put the money aside just now," he said. "Perhaps, after a little, we—we'll come back to that. I think you've forgotten, though, that when—when Uncle Fred and I had our difference, you had just thrown me over—had just ordered me never to speak to you again? I couldn't very well ask you to marry me, could I, under those circumstances?"

"I spoke in a moment of irritation," a very dignified Margaret pointed out. "You would have paid no attention whatever to it if you had really—cared."

Billy laughed rather sadly. "Oh, I cared right enough," he said. "I still care. The question is—do you?"

"No," said Margaret with decision, "I don't—not in the *least*."

"Peggy," Mr. Woods commanded, "look at me!"

"You have had your answer, I think," Miss Hugonin indifferently observed.

Billy caught her chin in his hand and turned her face to his. "Peggy, do you—care?" he asked softly.

And Margaret looked into his honest-seeming eyes, and, in a panic, knew that her traitor lips were forming "Yes."

"That would be rather unfortunate, wouldn't it?" she asked with a smile. "You see, it was only an hour ago I promised to marry Mr. Kennaston."

"Kennaston!" Billy gasped. "You—you don't mean that you care for *him*, Peggy?"

"I really can't see why it should concern you," said Margaret sweetly; "but since you ask—I do. You couldn't expect me to remain inconsolable forever, you know."

Then the room blurred before her eyes. She stood rigid, defiant. She was dimly aware that Billy was speaking, speaking from a great distance it seemed, and then, after a century or two, his face came back to her out of the whirl of things. And, though she did not know it, they were smiling bravely at one another.

"——and so," Mr. Woods was stating, "I've been an even greater ass than usual, and I hope you'll be very, very happy."

"Thank you," she returned mechanically; "I—I hope so."

After an interval, "Good-night, Peggy," said Mr. Woods.

"Oh——? Good-night," she said with a start.

He turned to go. Then, "By Jove!" said he grimly, "I've been so busy making an ass of myself I'd forgotten all about more—more important things."

Mr. Woods picked up the keys, and, going to the desk, unlocked the centre compartment with a jerk. Afterward he gave a sharp exclamation. He had found a paper in the secret drawer at the back which appeared to startle him.

Billy unfolded it slowly, with a puzzled look growing in his countenance. Then, for a moment, Margaret's golden head drew close to his yellow curls, and they read it through together. And, in the most melodramatic and improbable fashion in the world, they found it to be the last will and testament of Frederick R. Woods.

"But—but I don't understand," was Miss Hugonin's awed comment. "It's exactly like the other will, only—why, it's dated the seventeenth of June, the day before he died! And it's witnessed by Hodges and Burton—the butler and the first footman, you know—and they've never said anything about such a paper. And, then, why should he have made another will just like the first?"

Billy pondered.

By and by, "I think I can explain that," he said, in a rather peculiar voice. "You see, Hodges and Burton witnessed all his papers, half the time without knowing what they were about. They would hardly have thought of this particular one after his death. And it isn't quite the same will as the other: it leaves you practically everything, but it doesn't appoint any trustees, as the other did, because this will was drawn up after you were of age. Moreover, it contains these four bequests to colleges, to establish a Woods chair of ethnology, which the other will didn't provide for. Of course, it would have been simpler merely to add a codicil to the first will, but Uncle Fred was always very methodical—I think he was probably going through the desk the night he died, destroying various papers. He must have taken the other will out to destroy it just—just before he died. Perhaps—perhaps——" Billy paused for a little and then laughed unmirthfully. "It scarcely matters," said he. "Here is the will. It is undoubtedly genuine and undoubtedly the last he made. You'll have to have it probated, Peggy, and settle with the colleges. It—it won't make much of a hole in the Woods millions."

There was a half-humorous bitterness in his voice that Margaret noted silently. So, she thought, he had hoped for a moment that at the last Frederick R. Woods had relented toward him. It grieved her, in a dull fashion, to see him so mercenary. It grieved her—though she would have denied it emphatically—to see him so disappointed. Since he wanted the money so much she would have liked him to have had it, worthless as he was, for the sake of the boy he had been.

THEY FOUND IT TO BE THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF FREDERICK R. WOODS

"Thank you," she said coldly, as she took the paper; "I will give it to my father. He will do what is necessary. Good-night, Mr. Woods."

Then she locked up the desk in a businesslike fashion, and turned to him and held out her hand.

"Good-night, Billy," said this perfectly inconsistent young woman. "For a moment I thought Uncle Fred had altered his will in your favor. I almost wish he had."

Billy smiled a little.

"That would never have done," he said gravely, as he shook hands; "you forget what a sordid and heartless and generally good-for-nothing chap I am, Peggy. It's much better as it is."

Only the tiniest, the flimsiest fiction her eyes craved of him. Even now, at the eleventh hour, lie to me, Billy Woods, and, oh, how gladly I will believe!

But he merely said, "Good-night, Peggy," and went out of the room. His broad shoulders had a pathetic droop, a listlessness.

Margaret was glad. Of course, she was glad. At last she had told him exactly what she thought of him. Why shouldn't she be glad? She was delighted.

So, by way of expressing this delight, she sat down at the desk and began to cry, very softly.

XIII

HAVING duly considered the emptiness of existence, the unworthiness of men, the dreary future that awaited her—though this did not trouble her greatly, as she confidently expected to die soon—and many other such dolorous topics, Miss Hugonin decided to retire for the night. She rose, filled with speculations as to the paltriness of life and the probability of her eyes being red in the morning.

"It will be all his fault if they are," she consoled herself. "Doubtless he'll be very much pleased. After robbing me of all faith in humanity I dare say the one thing needed to complete his happiness is to make me look like a fright. I hate him! After making me miserable, now, I suppose, he'll go off and make some other woman miserable. Oh, of course, he'll make love to the first woman he meets who has any money. I'm sure she's welcome to him. I only pity any woman who has to put up with *him*. No, I don't," Margaret decided, after reflection; "I hate her, too!"

Miss Hugonin went to the door leading to the hallway and paused. Then—I grieve to relate it—she shook a little pink-tipped fist in the air.

"I detest you!" she commented between her teeth; "oh, how *dare* you make me feel so ashamed of the way I've treated you!"

The query—as possibly you may have divined—was addressed to Mr. Woods. He was standing by the fireplace in the hallway, and his tall figure was outlined sharply against the flame of the gas-logs that burned there. His shoulders had a pathetic droop, a listlessness.

Billy was reading a paper of some kind by the firelight, and the black outline of his face smiled grimly over it. Then he laughed and threw it into the fire.

"Billy!" a voice observed—a voice that was honey, and gold, and velvet, and all that is most sweet, and rich, and soft in the world.

Mr. Woods was aware of a light step, a swishing, sibilant, delightful rustling—the caress of sound in the rustling of a well-groomed woman's skirts—and of an afterthought of violets, of a mere reminiscence of orris, all of which came toward him through the dimness of the hall. He started noticeably.

"Billy," Miss Hugonin stated, "I'm sorry for what I said to you. I'm not sure it isn't true, you know, but I'm sorry I said it."

"Bless your heart!" said Billy; "don't you worry over that, Peggy. That's all right. Incidentally, the things you've said to me and about me aren't true, of course, but we won't discuss that just now. I—I fancy we're both feeling a bit fagged. Go to bed, Peggy! We'll both go to bed, and the night will bring counsel and we'll sleep off all unkindliness. Go to bed, little sister!—get all that beauty-sleep you aren't in the least need of, and dream of how happy you're going to be with the man you love. And—and in the morning I may have something to say to you. Good-night, dear."

And this time he really went. And when he had come to the bend in the stairs, his eyes turned back to hers, slowly and irresistibly drawn toward them, as it seemed, just as the sunflower is drawn toward the sun, or the needle toward the pole, or, in fine, as the eyes of young gentlemen ordinarily are drawn toward the eyes of the one woman in the world. Then he disappeared.

The mummery of it vexed Margaret. There was no excuse for his looking at her in that way. It irritated her. She was almost as angry with him for doing it as she would have been for not doing it.

Therefore she bent an angry face toward the fire, her mouth pouting in a rather inviting fashion. Then it rounded slowly into a sanguine O, which, of itself, suggested osculation, but, in reality, stood for "observe!" For the paper Billy had thrown into the fire had fallen under the gas-logs, and she remembered his guilty start.

"After all," said Margaret, "it's none of my business."

"It may be important," she considerately remembered. "It ought not to be left there."

So she fished it out with a big paper-cutter.

"But it can't be very important," she dissented afterward, "or he wouldn't have thrown it away."

(Continued on Page 30)

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The Two Political Platforms

HAS anybody read the platforms of the two parties except campaign speakers, political editors, and the men who wrote them? Here and there a hand goes up, but the overwhelming mass of the voters sit stolid, their expression strongly suggesting "What do you take us for? We're not so hard up for ways to waste time."

Yet the national platform of a great political party ought to be a document that every "intelligent" grown person in the country would eagerly read. It ought to embody in good simple English, and in words too well chosen to be numerous, the specific reasons why the party should keep or get the power to direct the National Administration — the things it could do if empowered, the things it would do.

Are these glittering generalities, these discursive and platitudinous vaguenesses put forth because we really have no great issues or because we have no great public men with courage and convictions and purposes?

When We Forget

THE Iroquois disaster is not a year old, and already the City Councils have begun to relax the severity of the enforcement of rules adopted for the regulation of theatres. At first the public safety was the only consideration. It made no difference whether a theatre could make money or not, it must give an absolute assurance that every person who entered its walls would come out alive.

But as the spell of the calamity has faded the old pulls resume their power. It is easy for councilmen to see now that it is not really necessary to have so many sprinklers, that it makes no great difference whether aisles lead directly to exits or not, that there has been an unnecessary amount of space between seats, and that gallery floors can just as well be pitched a little steeper.

If Congress had been in session at the time of the Slocum catastrophe there would undoubtedly have been a radical revision of the laws governing the construction, equipment and inspection of steamboats. But when the session opens it will have been six months since that funeral pyre blazed on the shore of North Brother Island, and the public will be thinking about the result of the election. The steamboat owners will not forget, though, and they will probably be able to convince Congress that it will not be wise to run amuck among time-honored institutions.

The effective range of the public memory is about three months, when the heart of the people is deeply stirred. At other times it is less. It is this that makes all reforms opposed by powerful special interests so nearly hopeless. If the proper legislative body happens to be in session at the very moment when the popular feelings are in eruption some appropriate law or ordinance may be passed; but in a few months the molten lava of the people's indignation will be cool enough to walk on, and then the measures extorted in a moment of irresistible emotion can be repealed or ignored.

Politicians and corporations systematically count on this shortness of the public memory. They are not greatly worried by outbreaks of frenzied indignation. They know that if a director of a homicidal company had to flee to Europe in disguise to escape the execrations of an outraged community he would be met at the dock three months later by admiring reporters asking him how he thought he should like the country.

"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" is a good saying, but at the same time we should be a better governed and a better served people if we had a little of the vindictive tenacity of the Indian.

Good Weapons for the Young Idea

IN HUNDREDS of cities, towns and townships the school boards are now busy changing the textbooks for the public schools. Often this is an excellent idea, probably as a rule the new books are better than the ones they replace. But too often the change is for the worse, is due to influences that should not obtain, and still more often the members of the board know no more about the merits and demerits of the new books than they did about the old ones.

It is amazing how little interest parents take in this matter of schoolbooks, how little knowledge they have of the various kinds of books published for the same purposes, some well done, others bad, most of them as stupid and unattractive as their wonderfully interesting subjects permit.

The school-boards are busy. The parents ought to be busy also. They would be astonished to find how interesting and valuable their industry was.

The Japanese Home Army

THE military experts who said at the beginning of the war that Japan was bound to be overwhelmed by Russia based their opinion principally upon the fact that Russia's army was much larger than Japan's. Russia had a million men on a peace footing, Japan 158,000. On a war footing Russia counted on over three and a half millions; Japan on 632,000.

It was a reasonable calculation — almost as reasonable as it would be to say that Turkey could thrash the United States, because Turkey has 700,000 men under arms and the United States only 60,000.

The authorities who reasoned in this way seem to have overlooked the element of time, or, rather, they counted it on one side and not on the other. They admitted that the Russian forces in Manchuria might be overmatched at the start, but they said that reënforcements would be trickling in every day over the Siberian Railroad, so that in the course of six months or a year the Czar's forces would overrun the Far East. But they forgot to consider what the Japanese would be doing in the mean time. They forgot that a people alert, energetic, patriotic and warlike can create an army in a year.

The war has now been going on for nearly seven months. There is no reason why every man sent from Japan to Korea or Manchuria should not have been replaced in the ranks at home by another man taken from the plow and transformed by diligent training into a soldier. There is every reason to suppose that this has been done, and that, therefore, the Japanese home army is at least as strong as it was before the first regiment sailed for the mainland. Probably it is stronger. There is no lack of the raw material of armies. Japan has 8,000,000 more people than France, and the organized army of France, on a war footing, is almost as large as Russia's. It is simply a question of willingness to assume burdens, and certainly Japan has shown no lack of that. If she chose, she could organize a more numerous army than Russia could pour into Manchuria if the Trans-Siberian Railway were double tracked and working night and day for the next two years. What reason is there to suppose that she will not do it, if necessary?

If the Japanese were willing to make such an effort in proportion to their population as Americans, North and South, made during the Civil War, they could put not less than 7,000,000 men into the field.

Of course, they could not be expected to equal our record in pensioning them afterward.

The Future of the City Dwellers

IF WE credit one half the statistics and opinions of the experts, things are bad for city people and are getting worse. Figures tell us that the urban populations, without the rural influx, are not only not self maintaining but are not producing the kinds of men and women fitted for leadership. Here is an instance from a reliable source told by a New York physician. He had as his guests eight men, each a potent factor in the affairs and business of the city. Not one was a native New Yorker. All were born on farms, rural hamlets or in villages. It is a kind of modern instance which we read from day to day in our newspapers, and the fact is proclaimed from forum and pulpit that the life of our greatest city is being kept strong and strenuous by the fresh blood of the country.

In these new conditions the native New Yorker becomes almost a lost equation.

But let the New Yorker take heart. There is always consolation in the knowledge that another fellow is in worse luck. Twenty years ago Doctor Cantlie, speaking of the rapidity with which any class of perpetual town dwellers becomes extinct, declared that "in the whole course of his experience he had never discovered a family completely London in birth and living that had survived into the third generation." Twenty years after Doctor Cantlie has repeated his statement before the Royal Commission, assembled to inquire into the physical deterioration of Scottish children. For twenty years nobody questioned Doctor Cantlie's declaration. Recently Mr. Everard Digby has solemnly gone into the figures, has combined tables and made deductions — but his results astonishingly support Doctor Cantlie. The remedy? This is rather neat: "Certain of Doctor Cantlie's remarks would seem to indicate that an annual fortnight or more at the seaside or in country places would largely stem the degeneration of the Londoner. If this be proved everything becomes much simplified."

The solution of the whole question will remain in the hands of some boldly imaginative Lord Avebury of the future, who will string fourteen Bank Holidays together as a yearly present to the people."

The Praise that Lies in Criticism

EVERY once in a while some publicist — to use a word big enough to include everybody who ever takes observation of the state of the public moral health — tries to score by offsetting against the thronging facts of corruption the even more numerous facts of substantial and even splendid achievement. This is laudable and valuable; and it is a pity that human nature is so constituted that it absorbs such facts far less greedily than the other kind. But, when all is said for this so-called optimism, it is more important that we see the errors and evils. The greatest force for progress, for individual or general progress, is intelligent criticism — the pointing out of what can and what should be done.

And that sort of criticism is, after all, the strongest and subtlest flattery. It implies that the person or the people to whom it is directed have done so well that there is hope of their doing better.

What we all need, individually and collectively, is helpful criticism. And any kind of criticism is better than the wholesale praise that lures to the bottomless bogs of self-complacence.

Why the Axe Paused

THE statistics say — and who would venture to dispute statistics? — that there are many hundreds of thousands fewer persons regularly employed now than were employed two years ago. And no doubt the waning of the boom has brought about conditions of less work to do. Nevertheless these men who have been laid off or put on part time might use their leisure for a little thinking.

Why were they selected from the body of workers?

What was the matter with *them* that the axe passed over the most of their fellows to pause upon them?

The list wasn't made up by lot. It wasn't altogether, surely, an expression of the personal likes and grudges of the boss.

What was it, then?

The Sanctification of the Tip

PROGRESS is largely the multiplying of devices for providing man with what he wants without obliging him to ask for it. It is the bringing of comfort with a saving of mental and physical effort.

All things considered, progress has done very well. It has done ill mainly in its overdoing. For progress is like ambition — when it overleaps itself it falls on the other side in much unhappiness. Perhaps in no respect has it vaunted its excesses with more deplorable consequences for the human race than in its overreaching eagerness to add items to the bill of fare.

In great cities nowadays it is easy to get anything you want except just what you really do want. The overloaded menu is the cause. Man attacks it with awe and throws it down in desperation. Every day it becomes more hateful to him. From every meal he arises with a conviction that he should be happy if he could return to another age when there were not so many things to eat.

It is really a delight in the mystifications of the menu to find a waiter who will take the responsibility of the selection and place upon the table a simple repast that did not have to be laboriously selected from the card. There is, indeed, a future ready to hand for the humble waiter who will study his patrons as doctors study their patients and prescribe for them.

For this man there must be a reward, and if he will only keep up his good work he may succeed in robbing the tipping evil of all its shame and making the silver left upon the plate a shining proof of man's proper appreciation.

South Africa After the War

By W. T. STEAD

The Black, White and Yellow Problem

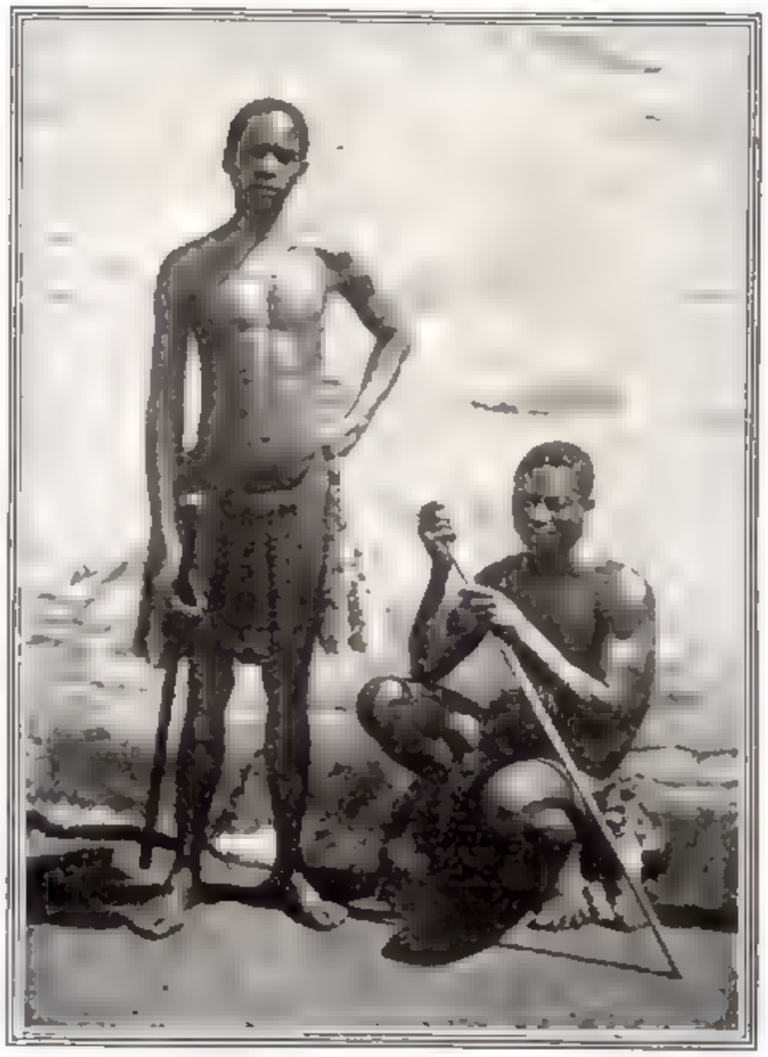
THERE is a tendency," said Mr. Malan, the coming leader of the Dutch South Africans, "for those who are accustomed to deal with populations of many millions to sneer at South African problems because they involve only a handful of white men. But no one can live in this country without feeling that he has to do with questions the mere touch of which raises a man" The phrase was characteristic of the speaker. It is true that the total number of white men in South Africa hardly exceed in number the babies who are born every twelve months in the British Isles. But this handful of white colonists have to face and to solve many of the most thorny problems of our time Among these problems none is more pressing than the question of how best the white man can hold his own in the midst of a colored race which enormously outnumbers him and which increases at least as rapidly as he. There are to-day in South Africa nearly ten colored men for every palefface. In Tasmania, in Victoria and in the United States the aboriginal inhabitant has wilted and withered before the advent of the white colonist. Not so in Africa

The black race has increased, is increasing, and will continue to increase at a ratio not less than that of his white-skinned neighbor. What will they do in the end thereof? No man knows

Without looking to the end, the problem is interesting enough. South Africa, before the advent of the white colonist, was cleared of millions of its native population by the massacres set on foot by Chaka, the South African Napoleon The carnage which was initiated by this supreme military genius of the Kaffir race has seldom been equaled in the history of recent wars Theal, the historian of the Cape, estimates that the number of natives slain as the direct and indirect result of the system of conquest inaugurated by Chaka can not have been less than two millions. So tremendous was the clearage of the blacks before room was made for the whites that it would almost appear as if this man-destroying machine had been invented by the ruthless Destinies in order to afford space for the planting of the seed of the chosen race in a land where the original human overgrowth had been swept off as by fire and the soil drenched in showers of blood

Into the void thus created by the stabbing assagai of the great Kaffir conqueror came Dutchmen, Frenchmen and Britons. With them came Malays from the Dutch settlements in the Eastern Archipelago, and negroes from the British slave settlements in the West Coast From the north came the remnants of native tribes which had escaped extermination at the hands of Chaka and his imitators, and so gradually the massacre-emptied land began to be refilled. In the course of the last hundred years various streams of navigation from many lands continued to filter various debris of other races into the country. It was not, however, till comparatively recent times that these exiguous runlets of colonization received a vast stimulus from two sources. One was the development of the sugar and fruit industry in Natal, which has led to the importation of 60,000 or 70,000 coolies from India into the garden colony of South Africa. The other was the discovery of the gold fields of the Rand, which attracted to Johannesburg the miscellaneous overflow of the adventurers of all the world. Of these the most conspicuous were the Jews, chiefly of German or Polish origin, who flocked to the Rand in such numbers that Johannesburg became known as Jewburg or as the new Jerusalem. To these polyglot and cosmopolitan elements it is now proposed to add a brand new ingredient in the shape of what is practically a State-organized immigration of male Chinese adults

The races of varied European, African and Asiatic stock have met and mingled and interbred in South Africa until we have between the Zambesi and Cape Town a motley parti-colored population of various origin, which is, however, roughly divided into three great classes—Boers, Britons and colored people



RAW KAFFIRS

The nondescript crowd at Johannesburg is like shifting sand British to-day, it may be Boer to-morrow. Its only allegiance is financial, not national It will lean first to one side then to the other as the state of the market and the prospect of a boom may seem to counsel. It is an element of disturbance It is not a centre of national organization. But its existence accentuates the difficulty of the permanent problems of South Africa, of which the solution of the native question is by no means the least

The lofty plateau of South Africa—Johannesburg is 6000 feet above the sea level, or more than twice the height of the highest peak of Table Mountain—renders it possible for white men to live, and breed, and rear a healthy offspring in what would otherwise be a black man's country But although white men settle and propagate their kind under the South African sun, the burden of manual labor falls upon the colored man. The white man is the director of black labor. He organizes it, pays it and profits by it. But the result is that physical and manual toil has come to be regarded as a thing unworthy the dominant race. Labor being confined to colored people seems to carry with it a taint of the tar brush The white aristocrat—and even a beggar, if he has a white skin—belongs to the noblesse and regards all manual labor as essentially servile, and therefore degrading Newspapers written by white men for white men express their sense of humiliation at seeing in the streets of some South African towns white men reduced to the "degradation of doing Hottentot's work"—which, being interpreted, means that some white men have taken to earn an honest living as cab drivers and teamsters. St. Francis, with his "Blessed be drudgery," is much needed in South Africa now. For the doctrine of the white aristocrat is here and elsewhere the same. "The masses ought to labor and we lie on sofas."

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from this that no white man works in South Africa. On the contrary, on the Boer farms the Boer and his sons work hard and long. In the mines of the Rand the white aristocrat bosses the plebeian blacks who work at his side, as submissive as the machine drill driven by compressed air which is the sceptre of his power. But there is a broad distinction between white man's work and black man's work It differs in different parts of the country. But, as a broad general principle, the white man will do no work which he can get a black, or brown, or yellow man to do for him. And as just now the black, brown and yellow men are not to be had except on their own terms, the white man is in a very disgruntled state of mind, and apt to blaspheme at slight provocation concerning the "disgraceful laziness" of the black brother

Meanwhile the black brother aforesaid lives and thrives and has a good time. He alone of any workingman whom I have met in the course of my travels appears to have attained the millennium of the European proletariat. He has entered into Utopia and enjoys it exceedingly. He is his own master. His wants are few. He can always command employment at wages which enable him to enjoy existence. He need not work more than three days a week His wages varying from half a dollar to seventy five cents a day, provide for all his needs. He is not haunted by any craving to accumulate a fortune. He has a hut, which, although often fearfully and wonderfully made out of old tin cans and biscuit-boxes, gives him all the shelter he needs in a climate where he can spend most of the day with enjoyment in the open air Outside the large towns he has usually a plot of ground of his own on which he can pasture his cow or his horse On native locations, where there is a wide area of commonage, he lives with his fellows in a kind of semi-socialistic paradise. His requirements in the way of clothing are few. His wives help to till the land and contribute to his rude comfort. If he wants more wives or more cows, or any other South African luxuries, he has only to tramp off to Johannesburg, where in six months he can accumulate the hundred dollars capital that he needs. His ideal of existence may not be a very high one. His standard of comfort may be low, but it suffices him. He is, in his small way, a landed proprietor or country gentleman. He is a man of leisure. He does not need to work more than he chooses to. His services are constantly in request; and if he cannot command his own terms he can stay at home and weed his own mealie patch. Under these circumstances the "laziness" of the black brother is not much to be wondered at.

It is, however, inconvenient to the white director of labor to have to do with so independent a gentleman, who usually wants to attend to his own pressing domestic affairs or his own mealie patch just at those

A NATIVE HUT, SOUTH AFRICA

seasons of the year when his services are most wanted in the vineyard or on the farm. As for the womenfolk who have to depend upon colored labor for household service, they are at their wits' end. The hired help usually sleeps out. She arrives at an uncertain hour in the morning, occasionally too late to light the fire for breakfast. She stays until after luncheon. About three o'clock she takes herself off, and the mistress sees her no more. Abigail usually has an establishment of her own, where she is her own mistress. Domestic service is not popular with white women. The habit of employing Kaffir men as house servants is at present confined to the Natal side of Africa, and is accompanied with serious drawbacks. Hence, though the black population is very comfortable in the possession of the realized ideals of the European proletariat—as much work as it wants, but no obligation to work more than it wants, ample leisure in which to live its own life, and wealth enough to satisfy all its needs—the white population is forever wondering in what way it can induce its colored brethren to take life more seriously, to develop new wants, and so be driven to do more work.

In Natal, the subtropical garden colony, in which there are hundreds and thousands of Kaffirs, the 70,000 white settlers have found it absolutely necessary to import from India some 70,000 coolies to do the work which the African native refuses to do. The Indian coolie is recruited under Government supervision. He is cheap. His wage for the first year is not more than two dollars and a half the month, he is engaged for a term of five years, with option of release at the end of three. He is brought to Natal and carried back to India free of charge. If he chooses to remain in the country at the end of his engagement he is free to do so. He can acquire land, enter into trade, and make the best of himself. He was a British subject to start with. He has the privileges of a British subject—barring the vote. The laws protecting him against ill-usage are severe and rigorously enforced. There is a good deal of grumbling among some of the white men that the colony is eaten up by coolies and that it is no place in which a white man can make a living. But when white men are imported they usually discover that it is easier and cheaper to have a coolie to work for them than to do the work themselves; and nearly every one agrees that to take the coolies away would reduce Natal into a wilderness. The coolie in Natal is a necessity. The colony imports about 15,000 coolies every year to make up the loss from mortality—which is not excessive—and to fill up the vacancies occasioned by the return of coolies to their own country.

The success with which coolies have been imported into Natal naturally set the other colonists a-thinking whether they could not tap the same inexhaustible reservoir of Asiatic labor. The net result of the meditation is to be seen in the demand for the introduction of Chinese coolies into the gold mines of the Rand.

The Greatest Gold Field in the World

THE Witwatersrand gold reef, of which Johannesburg is the centre, is one of the most recently developed gold fields in the world. The rock from which the gold is extracted is a blue gray stone, in which no trace of gold is visible to the naked eye. If there is anything that glitters it is safe to assume that it is iron pyrites rather than the precious metal. The auriferous ore is a thin seam of pebbly stone, which is patiently followed up and down its devious way across the Rand. Its yield is very uniform, and it pays to extract it as long as it yields nine pennyweights to the ton of ore. As the gold bearing seam descends to a great depth a great capital expenditure is required before the ore can be brought to the surface. It is then sorted, pulverized, treated with quicksilver and then, by the cyanide process, all the gold but eight or nine per cent. is extracted. This irreducible minimum of waste gold remains in the tailings, the vast white hills of which are the most conspicuous feature of the landscape as it has been "improved" by civilization. After some years it is expected that the influence of the atmosphere will render it possible to extract this last remnant of gold, but at present it has to be left where it is.

There are no nuggets. There are patches richer than others. But the glory of the reef is its uniformity. The yield can be calculated to a nicety. Below Johannesburg and the hills which stretch east and west there are stored, according to the calculations of mining experts, between five thousand and ten thousand millions of dollars worth of gold. It is at present being extracted at the rate of $70,000,000 per annum. If this rate is doubled the last ton of payable ore will be lifted in 1954. Of course, new reefs may be discovered. This calculation is based upon the reef now in sight, the area of which has been measured and its productivity accurately gauged. It is the treasure of the Nibelungenlied, come to light in the end of the nineteenth century.

The knowledge of the existence of five or ten thousand millions of dollars worth of gold is not equivalent to its possession. There is more gold in dilution in the salt sea than in all the mines of Johannesburg. There is said to be gold in the paving stones of London. There is certainly gold in the Welsh hills. But the value of auriferous ore depends entirely upon the cost of its extraction. The Rand would not have been worth working if side by side with the gold there had not been found vast deposits of coal, which can be delivered at the furnace at about two dollars a ton. But even cheap coal would not have sufficed to make the Rand a success if the mine owners could not have had at their command a supply of cheap labor. In Australia, where gold mining is a white man's industry, they calculate that ore that does not yield an ounce to the ton is hardly worth mining. In the Rand, with cheap coal and cheap labor, they can work ore at a profit when it yields only nine pennyweights to the ton.

White labor on the Rand is very dear. The white men employed in the mines receive from $100 to $150 a month. The Kaffirs are paid from twelve dollars to seventeen dollars and a half a month. As the white man turns out only twenty per cent. more ore a day than the Kaffir, the proposal that finds favor in England to substitute white men for colored does not exactly commend itself as a business proposition to the mine owners. The white man is not employed in hewing ore. He drives the machinery that drills the rock and superintends the colored men who work to his hand. From the first opening of the mines the securing of an adequate supply of native labor was one of the great preoccupations of the mine owners, and the desire to cheapen the price of that labor has been his constant dream.

The Colossal Blunder of the Boer War

ONE of the reasons that led the financial magnates of the Rand to advocate the war was their fixed belief that as the result of the British victory they would be able to cut down the wages offered to the Kaffirs as an inducement to go underground. It was a stupendous blunder. The war which impoverished the Boers had enriched the Kaffirs. Never before in the memory of man had colored men in South Africa reaped so rich a harvest as did the natives who acted as drivers for the British army. The native who had earned his dollar a day as teamster was not to be tempted into the mines by a beggarly pittance of thirty cents. Nor was that the only reason for the scarcity of labor. The Government, as soon as peace was declared, had to spend millions in repairing the havoc wrought by the army. It also undertook the construction of railways and other public works. Hence there sprang up a great demand for labor, and the Government competed necessarily with the mines in bidding for natives. The inevitable result followed. The mine owners could not get their complement of "boys." A great wail went up from the Rand. They were forced to reestablish the old rate of wages. But the native had been scared off. He never hankers after underground work. He is naturally a child of the sun. He seldom worked, even when the mines were busiest, more than six months in the year—sometimes not more than six months in three years.

The mines at present are employing 70,000 natives, of whom 55,000 come from Portuguese East Africa. The natives of British South Africa for the most part fight shy of the mines. The mortality is heavy. The treatment of the natives is not altogether the best. An effort was made to recruit in Central Africa. But the natives of the tropics do not take kindly to the cold and rarified air of the Rand. Johannesburg lies 6000 feet above the sea level. In Europe the highest inhabited village is only 5000 feet above the sea level. A proposal was made to recruit in the West Indies. But the Jamaican colored man is not so tractable as the Kaffir. His head is full of American notions, and the suggestion of drawing upon the Western Hemisphere was scouted. Then it was that the proposal was made to bring in the Chinese. When it was first mooted a great groan went up. The prejudice against Chinese cheap labor is as great in British Columbia as it is in California, and the Exclusion Act of the United States is not more stringent than the law by which the Chinese are excluded from Australia and New Zealand. More than twenty years ago the dearth of labor in the Cape Colony led to an outcry in favor of importing coolies. But Sir John Molteno, the then Prime Minister, vetoed the proposal on the ground that there were already sufficient native difficulties in South Africa and that it was not true statesmanship to add to their number the yellow man. The workingmen at Johannesburg were the first to give voice to the general alarm, but after a time the mine owners succeeded in cajoling or in bullying them into acquiescence, more or less sullen, to what was represented as a melancholy necessity. On Good Friday 2000 workingmen met at Johannesburg and protested against the importation of Chinese labor, but it was the last shriek of opposition in the Rand. The mine owners silenced critics in the local press by the simple process of changing the editors. Local tradesmen were assured that there would be no boom until the Chinese came, and the unemployed workman was consoled by promises of ample employment after the advent of the Chinese. The local clergy were also won over. Lord Milner was an enthusiastic advocate of the importation of coolies. What with official pressure, financial influence, and the widespread conviction that things would never mend till the Chinese were brought over, public opinion on the Rand went over with a slump, and it was decided, with the concurrence of the home Government, to bring over from 50,000 to 70,000 coolies under the provisions of an ordinance which was carefully drawn up for the purpose: first, of preventing the imported coolie doing any other kind of work but that of a laborer at the mines, secondly, for securing his deportation from the country at the close of the three years' engagement. The framing of the ordinance was prefaced by the publication of a report drawn up by a committee known as the Transvaal Labor Committee, which took evidence as to the alleged scarcity of native labor. This commission reported that there was a shortage of labor not only in the mines but on the farms and the railways.

The Objection to Chinese Labor

THE announcement that Chinese labor was to be imported led to a vigorous outburst of protest and denunciation from New Zealand and from Australia. In the Cape Colony both parties at the general election expressed their hostility to Chinese labor, and the House of Assembly on its meeting unanimously passed a resolution against the Chinese. The chief agitation against the Chinese had its centre among the trades unions of England. Their point of view was taken up by the Liberal party, and a great storm arose which, at one time, threatened to upset the Ministry. They weathered the storm, but it so materially injured their very slender electoral chances that since that time the only thought of the Ministerialists has been how best to postpone the appeal to the constituencies, which for them could only have one result.

The chief ground of attack on the part of the British Liberals was that the restrictions upon the liberty of the Chinese, stipulated for in the ordinance, amounted to the establishment of virtual slavery under the British flag. Twice in solemn treaties the British Government had bound the Boers to abstain from apprenticing natives under indentures on the ground that such a system was slavery under another name. Now, here was the British Government itself, without waiting for any expression of the wishes of the colonists of South Africa, insisting upon the importation of Chinese under a system of indenture which forbade them to leave the compound, to do any other than mere laborers' work, to become owners of land or to settle in the country. On the other hand, it was contended, not without reason, that the Chinese were free to enter into the proposed contract or to stay at home. If they thought that the advantages offered outweighed the disadvantages in the shape of the limitations laid down in the ordinance it would have been a strong measure to have refused them permission to enter into a contract with capitalists anxious to secure their labor. Without such limitations no one would have allowed the Chinese to land at any price.

After a prolonged controversy, in which Lord Milner lost his temper and declared that he did not care twopence for the criticism of ill-informed persons 6000 miles away, the convention was finally signed with the Chinese Government and the ordinance was ratified by the King.

Will the Coolie System Pay?

IT IS estimated that there are from 50,000 to 70,000 coolies who will sign the contract which binds them for three years. The mine owners will then carry them by steamer from China to South Africa at a cost of twenty-five dollars a head, and, after three years, carry what is left of them back to China at a similar expenditure. Passage money and recruiting expenses will probably cost seventy-five dollars a head. The food of the coolie will cost, it is estimated, five dollars a month. The wages that are paid to the Kaffir vary from twelve dollars and a half to seventeen dollars and a half a month. Rumor has it that the Chinese are being engaged at five dollars a month. This is denied by the mining magnates, who assert that they intend, by putting the Chinese on piecework, to pay them even higher wages than the Kaffir now earns. Their profit will be made out of the superior regularity of Chinese labor. Supposing that the average rate paid to the Chinese is only half what is paid to the Kaffir, which may be averaged at fifteen dollars, the net result on a shipment of 50,000 coolies will work out as follows:

Wages of 50,000 coolies for three years at $7.50 a month	$13,500,000
Food and lodging coolies for three years at $5 a month	9,000,000
Freight and recruiting charges to and from China at $75 a head	3,750,000
	$26,250,000

If the same number of Kaffirs were employed at the present wages the cost, plus food, would be $36,000,000. At this rate the Chinese would save their employers $9,750,000 in wages in three years.

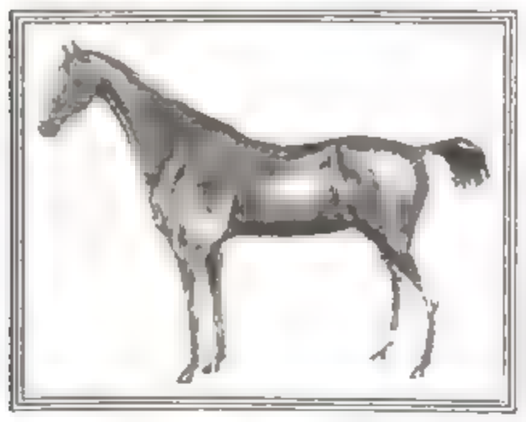
But this is not all. If the Chinese can be bound over to work at five dollars a month—and that certainly was more than the sum first talked of—their presence in the mine will be a potent argument in favor of reducing the Kaffir wages to the same figure. In that case the mine owners would save in wages paid to 70,000 Kaffirs now working at fifteen dollars a month no less than $25,000,000 in three years if their wages were reduced to the Chinese standard. On the other hand, there is at least a chance that the Chinese, finding the Kaffir received fifteen dollars a month, may—contract notwithstanding—insist upon their wages being leveled up to the Kaffir standard. In that case the mine owners would lose the cost of freight and recruiting in China—$3,750,000. They stand to win thirty-five millions if all goes well, to lose less than four if the chances turn against them. Is it any wonder that they are keen to secure the importation of the Chinese?

There is, however, one contingency which the mine owners have overlooked. The air of the Rand is keen and biting in the three months of winter. The Rand, lying 6000 feet above the sea level, is not exactly a health resort for Chinese coolies from the tropics. A great railway contractor, who has frequently seen his Kaffir laborers frozen to death at night when railways were being constructed on the Rand, told me that he did not think more than forty per cent. of the coolies imported from the south of China would survive their first winter in Johannesburg. A mortality of sixty per cent. per annum would put a speedy stop to any recruiting for the Rand in China. The mortality of Kaffirs in wintertime in the mines raises their annual death rate to nearly eight per cent. But they are in their own country, whereas the Chinese who will come from the treaty ports will be recruited from a sweltering tropical region where frost is unknown.

In any case their employment is demanded solely as a temporary measure. Even as a temporary measure it should not have been sanctioned until, whether by a plebiscite or by the establishment of responsible government, the people of the South African colonies had an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the subject. The Boers, as a whole, vehemently object to the advent of the Mongolian. Outside the district of which Johannesburg is the centre, it is probable that the immense majority of the inhabitants would vote against the coming of the Chinese. But the magnates were impatient. Lord Milner would brook no delay, and the great experiment is now being tried.

Editor's Note—This is the fourth of six papers by Mr. Stead on present conditions in South Africa.

The Evolution of the Two-Minute Trotter—By David Buffum



FLORA TEMPLE
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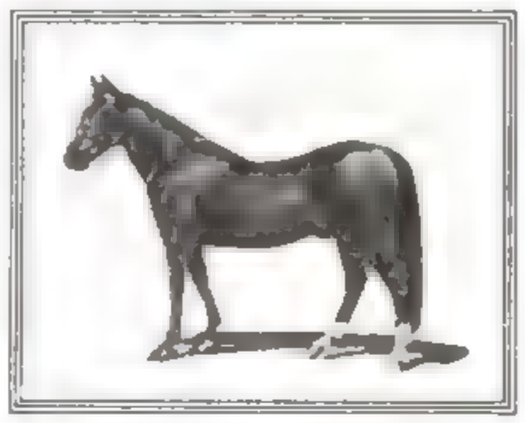

RYSDYK'S HAMBLETONIAN

WHEN Lou Dillon trotted her mile against time in two minutes people very naturally exclaimed, "Wonderful!" But the production of a horse that can do this is probably even a greater achievement than the majority suppose. And when we reflect upon the comparatively short time that has elapsed since the trotters were first registered as a distinct breed, and that even then it was composed of so many and such heterogeneous elements that thoughtful horsemen conceded its claim to be regarded as such with many reservations, the exploit may well be regarded as one of the great achievements of the age, yielding in brilliancy to none in the long annals of horses and horsemanship.

That such animals as Lou Dillon, Major Delmar, Cresceus, The Abbot and other great trotters are in no wise the result of chance nor even of the wisdom and skill of any one horse-breeder is self-evident. They represent many lifetimes of study, experiment and research and crown the labors of many bygone horsemen in a field where, perhaps more than in any other, one must, to attain success, be in close touch with Nature and possessed of an intimate knowledge of her laws. To describe their evolution in such manner as to show clearly how it was brought about it is necessary for me not only to refer to the efforts of American horsemen since we first began to breed horses for speed at the trot, but to take a brief glance at the horses of an earlier period.

In the early history of the English race horse but little headway was made in his development until the introduction of Arabian blood. The value of this in giving speed, endurance and external finish was learned at first by slow degrees, but was fully demonstrated in the days of the Godolphin Arabian. Then it was that English breeders learned that great central truth in the science of horse-breeding, that *Arabian stock is the source of all that is most excellent in horses.* Just why this is so—whether owing to certain characteristics in the foundation stock, or, what seems more probable, to the skill, continued through innumerable generations, of a race of men who were familiar with the great principles of stock-breeding before other nations had learned its alphabet—cannot be said; but the fact remains. English horsemen then bred back again and again to Arabian strains until there was practically no other blood in their racehorses; and the very term "thoroughbred," now for many years used to designate the English running horse, means *bred thoroughly* to this parent stock. So the thoroughbred, although the art of man and a country generous of oats and grass have modified his exterior, possesses in full measure the two most distinctive traits of the Arab, speed and endurance—the former in an even greater degree—and likewise the prepotency that comes from having been long bred on precisely similar lines.

In the earlier days of our country thoroughbreds were very naturally regarded as the most to be desired of all animals and, whenever a farmer could, he secured the services of a thoroughbred stallion for his brood-mare. Such horses, however, were few in number as compared with those of humbler origin and the majority of farmers had to content themselves with such stock as was available. Thus the breed of American horses, if it could be called a breed at all, was of an extremely composite character and included not only the blood of nearly every type of English horse then in use, but also that of the little horse of Canada commonly called the Canuck. One distinct breed sprang up, the Narragansett pacers of southern Rhode Island, now known to have been of Andalusian origin; but these horses were chiefly bred in their purity for export, and it is doubtful if they left much impress upon American stock in general.

With a native stock composed of so many elements, and often bred with little reference to pedigree, it is no wonder that speed at the trot, when it first showed itself, seemed more a matter of accident than anything else. That it was not looked for by the breeders of the earliest celebrities is certain, for Dutchman was first found by Hiram Woodruff working in a string team on a brick-wagon, and Flora Temple, before her career as a trotter, was used by a drover to haul his gig. But let us look at the breeding of a few of the old-time performers and see if it throws any light on the matter of speed at the trot.

Trustee, the first horse to trot twenty miles in an hour, was by imported Trustee (thoroughbred); his dam, Fanny Pullen, largely of thorough blood.

Dutchman, though his breeding is not definitely known, was said to be sired by a thoroughbred horse, and both his appearance and characteristics indicated a goodly percentage of thorough blood.

Lady Blanche, foaled in [illegible], was by Abdallah, a son of Mambrino, by imported Messenger (thoroughbred).

Lady Suffolk, foaled in 1833, was by Engineer, a son of imported Messenger (thoroughbred); her dam by Plato, also a son of imported Messenger.

Flora Temple, foaled about 1845, was by One Eyed Hunter, a son of Kentucky Hunter (thoroughbred).

We find in every one of these horses a large proportion of thorough blood; two out of the four whose breeding is known are descendants of Messenger, and Lady Suffolk is not only inbred to Messenger but is only one remove from him on her sire's side and two on her dam's.

Two old-time stallions, though their fame did not come till much later, should also be mentioned with the early trotters.

Abdallah, foaled in 1823, was by Mambrino, a son of imported Messenger; his dam the trotting mare [illegible].

American Star, foaled in 1837, an horse subsequently noted as a sire of speed-producing daughters, was by American Star; his dam by Henry and his grandsire by Messenger.

It would seem to be obvious that thorough blood was an important element in the make-up of a trotter, and also, judging by the examples at hand, that it was well to have it come through imported Messenger. And I may as well say here as anywhere that events have proved this to be a fact and that to imported Messenger originated the best strains of trotting blood now in our country. But how little this was then understood or appreciated is shown by the fact that Abdallah, now honored as the sire of that greatest of American horses, Rysdyk's Hambletonian, was allowed to die through neglect and starvation on a sandy beach on Long Island. Apart from the pathetic spectacle of the grand old horse perishing in this ignominious and miserable way, the loss thus unconsciously occasioned to the interests of trotting-horses is a matter for deep regret and recalls the scriptural text, "My people are destroyed through lack of knowledge."

There was a great deal of groping in the dark in the breeding that followed and a great many bitter disappointments and heart-sickening failures. A constant difficulty was that many of the stallions in use were of such mingled strains of blood that they were uncertain in transmitting their qualities to their progeny. For the principle that "like begets like" is only operative among animals of a pure breed; and when a stock horse is of such mixed lineage that his son or daughter is liable to "take back" to any one of a dozen ancestors all different, there is little pleasure or satisfaction in breeding. The introduction of more thorough blood would have added to the prepotency; but, despite the evidence to the contrary, a belief prevailed that thorough blood was antagonistic to the trotting action and therefore to be kept as remote as possible. It thus came about that some rank quitters were bred, horses that, although they had speed, could not stand up to a race of broken heats. And it has been said, with much reason, that "even God hates a quitter."

The number of blanks in the lottery (for so it was then frequently called) of breeding caused serious reflections upon the course being followed and, more than twenty-five years after the days of Dutchman and Flora Temple, some very intelligent horsemen felt that in many of the essential qualities of the race-horse the earlier celebrities had never been surpassed, and that therefore the improvement in trotters was much less than was commonly supposed. Looking back now, however, one cannot but feel that in reality a great advance had been made. For, not to mention other sires, the great Rysdyk's Hambletonian had been bred and was now founding a family destined to be without a peer in the racing world, and, notwithstanding the innumerable failures and disappointments and blunders in breeding, nothing was now more certain than that trotters were begotten by trotters. A new and distinct breed, in fact, was in process of formation.

Familiar as the pedigree of Rysdyk's Hambletonian is to horsemen, I here subjoin it—partly because any account of American horses would be incomplete without it and partly for the benefit of such of my readers as do not already know it. It is worthy of thoughtful examination and shows pretty clearly where the speed-producing power came from. The horse himself certainly could not be called handsome, nor was he specially speedy—2.40 or 2.45 being about his gait. But he was a horse of great vitality and stamina, and illustrates, as few stallions do, the truism that the value of a stock horse lies not in his own performances but in those of his sons and daughters.

There were many intermediate steps to be taken, however, between the founding of this family and the production of the two-minute trotter.

There are two ways by which the prepotency of a new breed can be rendered greater and its type more firmly fixed: first, by in-breeding; second, by an occasional fresh admixture of that pure strain of blood which forms its most important component part. After the establishment of the Hambletonian family the first method was followed with renewed zeal and with fine results. Many horsemen, pondering on the blood-lines of the great sire, now began to question whether it might not be wise to go back to the fountain-head and add to the blood of Messenger a little more of the thoroughbred strain. As a matter of common-sense, Messenger surely was not the only thoroughbred that could beget speed at the trot, however gifted he might be in that line; the progeny of Trustee, Bellfounder and others were speedy at the trot. Leland Stanford was the greatest advocate of the thoroughbred cross, arguing that,

Imported Messenger

Rysdyk's Hambletonian { [illegible] / Amazonia

Charles Kent mare { Imported Bellfounder (thoroughbred) / [illegible]

Bishop's Hambletonian { Imported Messenger / [illegible]

[illegible] { Imported [illegible]

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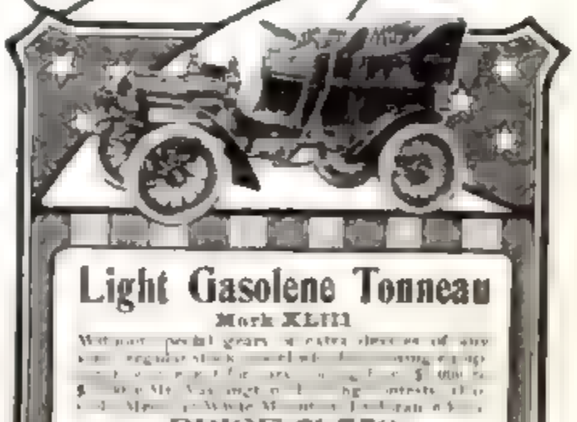

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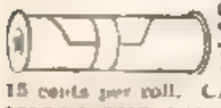

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MAJOR DELMAR, 1:59¼

as the thoroughbred already possessed all the qualities desired except the ability to trot fast, the more thorough blood in the trotter the better, even to the extent, if it were possible, of simply engrafting the trotting action upon the thoroughbred horse. He purchased Electioneer and bred him to strictly thoroughbred mares.

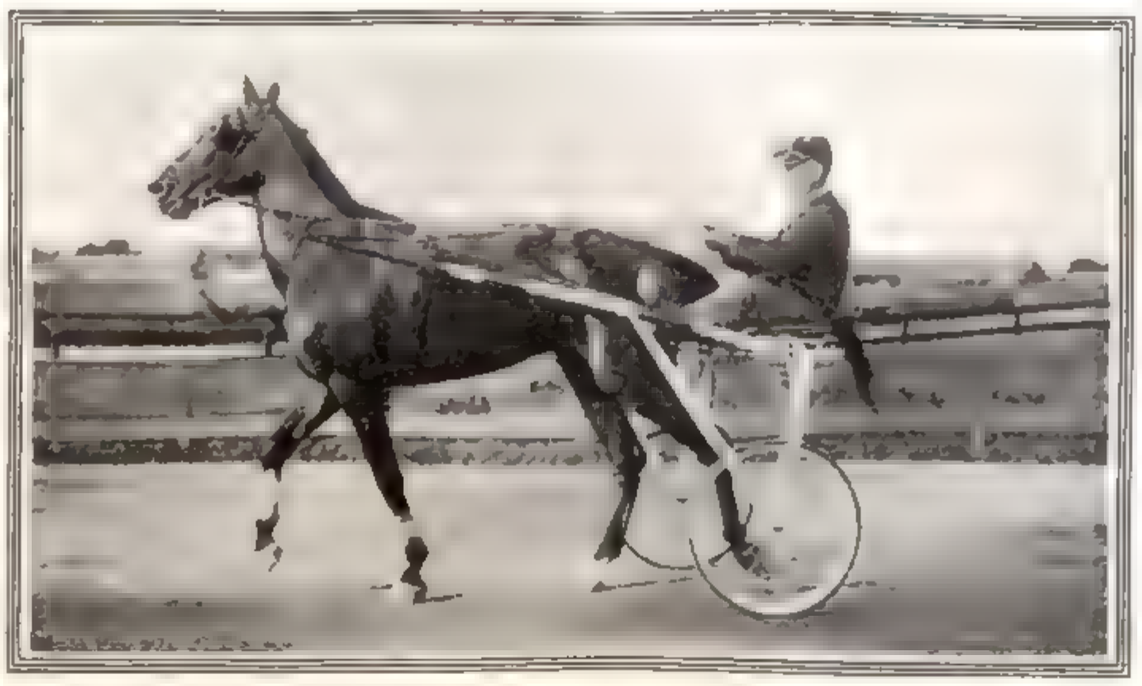
This was regarded as an extreme experiment, even by those friendly to the thoroughbred cross, for few believed that it was wise to have it quite so near as that. But the stallion Palo Alto, 2.12¼, was a result of this way of breeding, and the California stock rose to fabulous prices. It was purchased largely by Eastern breeders, and, more than ever before, trotters began to look fine and bloodlike.

Another factor that tended to the more rapid evolution of speed was an increased attention to the choice of the dam. The old-fashioned idea that good blood was of more importance in the sire than in the dam was a false one. It had its origin, not in any observed preponderance of prepotency on the sire's side, but simply in the fact that a mare could only perpetuate her qualities by the slow process of single births, whereas a stallion could be the father of a great number of foals in a single year. But it is quality, not numbers, that counts, the man in the scriptural parable justly reckoned the one pearl of great price more valuable than everything else he possessed. Nature gives but sparingly of her very best, in any event; and when it was demonstrated by experience, and cold, actual dollars and cents, that the single foal of a choice mare was sometimes worth more than all the foals in toto that his father ever produced from mares less carefully selected, then brood-mares rose to their true place of honor. The Arabs knew the value of their mares hundreds of years ago; but we often have to relearn lessons which have been thoroughly mastered at some time in the past.

It is now nineteen years since Jay-Eye-See trotted his mile in 2.10 on the track at Providence, Rhode Island. On the occasion of such phenomenal speed there was naturally more or less discussion of the chances of ultimately lowering the trotting record to two minutes and the length of time it might take. It was the opinion of sagacious horsemen that rapidly as we seemed to be approaching the two minute mark, it was still a far goal and though removed by only ten seconds, one that it would take a long time to reach. Whether nineteen years is a long time or not depends upon the point of view; undoubtedly, in the eyes of many it is. But considering the low records with which we are dealing and the fact that the breed of American trotters must still be classed as a new one and therefore of less prepotency and fixity of type than it will ultimately have, I do not think the time can properly be considered a long one, but rather the reverse.

So much wonder is often expressed by those unfamiliar with the education of horses at the amount of training bestowed on a trotter—especially as they say "as he was *bred* for a trotter and so ought to trot fast of his own accord"—that I think I should add a few words on this point. Trotters often require considerable training chiefly because, though the trot is undoubtedly a natural gait, it is not the gait at which the horse naturally goes at his greatest speed. For the same reason it is often necessary for a horse to get thoroughly over the flightiness and giddiness of youth before he is fit for great performances on the track. There are, of course, cases of phenomenal precocity, just as there are in the human race; but it may be doubted whether great precocity, in either horse or man, is ever desirable in the long run, and the saying of Hiram Woodruff, many years ago, that "the best trotters never reach their best speed without a great deal of handling," is probably as true to-day as it ever was.

Can we improve our trotters still further? There is no question about it, but in looking forward it is well to keep two things in mind: first, that we are approaching the point where greater speed at the trot will be impossible and that therefore the lowering of records must be constantly slower and in less degree, and second, that great improvement may be going on, even though records be not materially lowered. The increased fixity of type that is sure to follow; the higher average of speed for all trotting-bred horses; the beauty and finish that have already come from the fine blood-lines in use and which, as time passes, are destined to become more and more general—all these things we may regard with no less pride and satisfaction than the occasional exhibition of great speed.



LOU DILLON, 1:58¼

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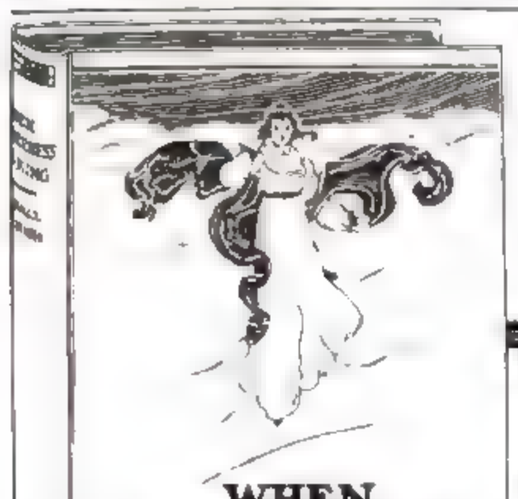

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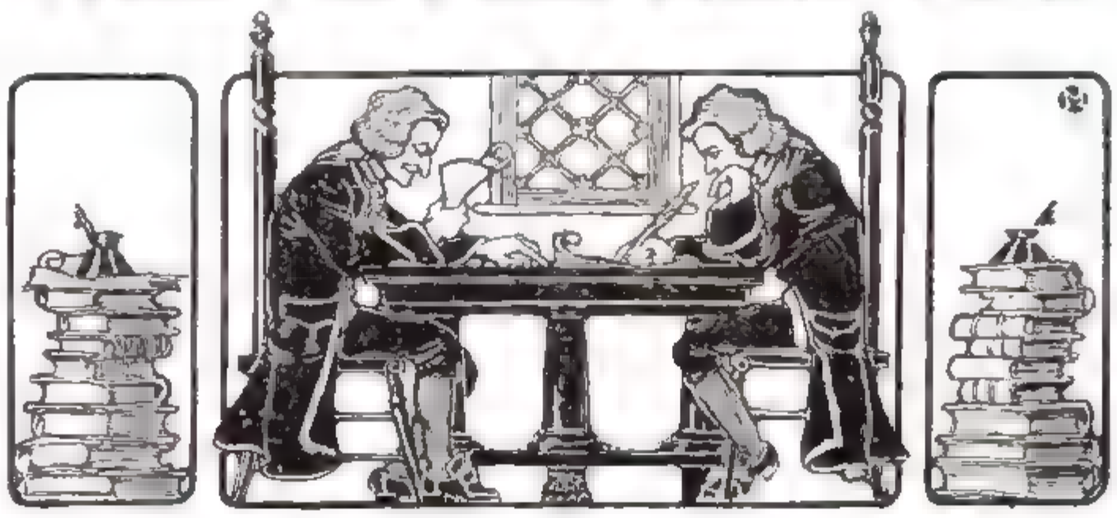

THE WOMAN WITH THE FAN—A novel of London society and moral growth, by the author of The Green Carnation.

¶ "The Barbarians" was Matthew Arnold's name for the British aristocracy and he would have rejoiced in the Lord Holme of Mr. Robert Hichens' The Woman With the Fan *(Frederick A. Stokes Company)*. Lord Holme was a big brute of a man, good-looking, immensely self-satisfied, obstinate yet irresolute, because he had not an idea in his head and contemptuous of everything that he did not understand, though he understood almost nothing. When, at Mrs. Ongrin's musicale, he was introduced to a distinguished French actor, and the actor appealed to him in some point in the conversation, Lord Holme, "who scarcely understood a word of French, and always looked rather contemptuous when it was talked in his presence, straddled his legs and uttered aloud, 'Oh, wee! Oh, wee wee!' and laughed."

His wife, Viola, was a girl of great personal beauty who "had a peculiar power of awakening in others that which she usually seemed not to possess herself—imagination, passion, not only physical but ethereal and of the mind, a tenderness for old sorrows, desire for distant, fleeting, misty glories not surely of this earth." Most strongly did she have this gift when she sang, for in conversation she was cynical, flippant, and convinced that "the real beauty that rules the world is lodged in the epidermis." Accordingly her admirers were divided between the men who reverenced the "white angel" that they thought they detected in hiding, housed unawares, and the men who were fascinated by the brilliant manipulator of effects, "the woman with the fan."

Viola herself is in doubt between the two—in doubt of her love for her husband, whom the woman of intelligence begins to despise, when the bolt falls. Driving home rapidly from the concert, her automobile turns to dodge a hansom, skids on the wet asphalt, strikes the curb, overturns and catches fire. When they pull her from underneath she is burnt and scarred beyond recognition. Her husband flies from her in terror. On her recovery she goes to Italy to hide herself. Robin Pierce, one of the lovers of the white angel, follows her—but for him, too, the test is severe beyond his strength. "He was not permitted to be what he longed to be;" he found "the flesh had a mind of its own, that the body would not feel as his spirit willed it to feel," and he, too, turned from her. Even in the face of her boatman she detected the instinctive aversion of a beauty-loving nature from the ugly. It was too much for her. Life, she felt, had done with her—why not she with life?

Then came Carew, no blind worshiper of the white angel, but one who, seeing both sides of the woman's nature, understanding fully the conflict of forces in her temperament and her education, understood, also, that this was the critical moment for her and for him. He drank, and Viola knew it. It was killing him, but it had not drowned the unquenchable spirit that still flamed in his eyes. She could save him. It did not matter to him that she was disfigured. He was down in the pit and she could help him out. The thought that in any way she might be precious to any living creature halted her—and is there any need to go farther?

Such is the story—not an ample, spacious one; turning narrowly even on the question that every woman asks her lover; but resolutely, pertinaciously told, clinging so closely to circumstance that the narrative has an illusory reality that blinds one to the artifice of the plot. Lord Holme and his loud "Wee! wee!"; the French actor, "very short, very stout, very intelligent looking, *with a face that seemed almost too flexible to be human*"—all these people, even if they appear for only an instant, are carefully picked out with the sharpest definiteness of outline and the most accurate sense of the weave and texture of a situation. The English is always careful—always, like the French actor, "very intelligent," at moments inhumanly so, but rarely inspired. Yet there is that sentence first quoted of "tenderness for old sorrows" and a figure toward the close of the book that would be hard to overpass for complete and satisfying beauty. Viola was in the great emotional crisis of her life.

There were within her tremendous activities of which she was scarcely conscious. *She was like a woman who wakes at night without knowing why, and hears afterward that there was a tumult in the city where she dwelt.*"

¶ **MINOR MENTION:** Athenæus, called by Suidas a literary man, who wrote in the middle of the third century, cites in his writings no less than 1200 separate works and 800 authors, and of the latter the names of a very large number are given in his Banquet of the Learned as those of authors who had written on fish and fishing.

Since the days of Athenæus his list has been added to extensively. Mr. Charles Bradford, who has written before on angling, and very entertainingly, puts another title to the list with The Angler's Secret *(G. P. Putnam's Sons)*. He treats, with many felicitous quotations, of the nature of the angler and his sport, its ethics and its practical pursuit. Toward the closing chapters the discussion runs to ways and means—the choice and make of flies, recipes against insects, clothing, footwear, measures of emergency in case of simple accidents, and the like. The book is useful and entertaining.

¶ **The Romance of Piscator,** by Henry W. Lanier *(Henry Holt & Co.)*, dedicated to "every one who has harkened to the siren song of the reel," is of companion stuff, but different make. Piscator is not wholly fisherman. He finds time, also, to listen to the song of the Peri. His adventures thereafter alternate between fishing and lovemaking, and both he sometimes in troubled waters. The story is lightly and pleasantly told, with a wholesome, open-air freshness.

¶ **America, Asia and the Pacific,** by Wolf von Schierbrand *(Henry Holt & Co.)*, is an argument for commercial expansion addressed from the facts to the future. Special attention is directed to Asiatic markets as influenced by the Russian War and the building of the Panama Canal, and three chapters are given to South America, "our natural market." There seems to be a consensus of opinion among all forward thinkers, in all countries, that the Pacific Ocean will be the theatre of the next great conflict for preeminence among the nations. Mr. Von Schierbrand reminds us that we have exceptional opportunities, and exhorts us to bestir ourselves. Covering, as he does, so large a field of economics, sociology, military and naval strategy, and international politics, he is obliged to assume a somewhat assertive tone, and many of his assumptions suffer for want of critical support. No doubt, though, the book does a service in pointing out a much needed lesson.

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The Clew of the Silver Spoons

Concluded from Page 3

difficulty in coming to a knowledge of my [illegible] Of course, I never mentioned these disappearances to him. They were all trivial, as I have said, and so far as the silver spoon was concerned, it was of no great value either. But I thought the bet and the recovery of the spoon would teach him a lesson: it apparently has not done so. On the night of the twenty-third he sat at my right hand, as you will see by consulting your diagram of the table and the guests. I asked him a question twice, to which he did not reply, and, looking at him, I was startled by the expression in his eyes. They were fixed on a distant corner of the room, and, following his gaze, I saw what he was looking at with such hypnotizing concentration. So absorbed was he in contemplation of the packet there so plainly exposed that he seemed to be entirely oblivious of what was going on around him. I roused him from his trance by jocularly calling Gibbes' attention to the display of money. I expected in this way to save Innes from committing the act which he seemingly did commit. Imagine, then, the dilemma in which I was placed when Gibbes confided to me the morning after what had occurred the night before. I was positive Innes had taken the money, yet I possessed no proof of it. I could not tell Gibbes, and I dared not speak to Innes. Of course, Monsieur, you do not need to be told that Innes is not a thief in the ordinary sense of the word. He has no need to steal, and yet apparently cannot help doing so. I am sure that no attempt has been made to pass those notes. They are doubtless in his house at Kensington at this present moment. He is, in fact, a kleptomaniac, or a maniac of some sort.

And now, Monsieur Valmont, was my hint regarding the silver spoons of any value to you?"

"Of the most infinite value, Mr. Dacre."

"Then let me make another suggestion. I leave it entirely to your bravery: a bravery which I confess I do not myself possess. Will you take a hansom, drive to Mr. Innes' house on the Cromwell Road, confront him quietly, and ask for the return of the packet? I am anxious to know what will happen. If he hands it to you, as I expect he will, then you must tell Mr. Gibbes the whole story."

"Mr. Dacre, your suggestion shall be immediately acted upon, and I thank you for your compliment to my courage."

I found that Mr. Innes inhabited a very grand house. After a time he entered the study on the ground floor, to which I had been conducted.

He held my card in his hand, and was looking at it with some surprise.

"I think I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Valmont," he said courteously enough.

"No. I have called on a matter of business. I was once investigator for the French Government, and now am doing private detective work here in London."

"Ah! And how is that supposed to interest me? I have nothing that I wish investigated. I did not send for you, did I?"

"No, Mr. Innes, I merely took the liberty of calling to ask you to let me have the package you took out of Mr. Bentham Gibbes' frock-coat pocket on the night of the twenty-third."

"He wishes it returned, does he?"

"Yes."

Mr. Innes calmly went to a desk, which he unlocked and opened, displaying a veritable museum of trinkets of one sort and another. Pulling out a small drawer, he took from it the packet containing the five twenty-pound notes.

Apparently it had never been undone. With a smile he handed it to me.

"You will make my apologies to Mr. Gibbes for not returning it before. Tell him I have been unusually busy of late."

"I shall not fail to do so," said I with a bow.

"Thanks so much. Good-morning, Monsieur Valmont."

"Good-morning, Mr. Innes."

And so I returned the packet to Mr. Bentham Gibbes, who pulled the notes from between their pasteboard protection and begged me to accept them.

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Love and the Locksmiths

(Concluded from Page 7)

protruded, holding the "slingshot." There was a snap and whirr.

The dog jumped three feet into the air and rushed, a whirlwind of snarling rage, from shed to henhouse to pear tree, and around the course on a second lap. The little tree bent back and forth like a whip, and Mr. Nickerson shrieked in terror.

"Consarn you, Eben!" he bellowed. "Don't you do that again."

A chamber window opened, and Almena's pretty head, covered with her Sunday hat, looked out.

"Why, mother!" she exclaimed, "what are you doing up there? Mr. Nickerson, I didn't know you could climb so. And there's Eben in the henhouse! Hello, Eben!"

"Almena Bilberry!" commanded the widow, "come downstairs this minute and open the door."

"Can't," answered the young lady sweetly. "I'm afraid of the dog."

"If Eben had any spunk," observed Jethro, "he'd come out and drive the critter away."

"That's so," agreed Mrs. Bilberry. "Eben, if you don't do it I sha'n't give you them extry wages."

"Huh!" grunted the prisoner from his little window; "I ain't goin' to be et up for no ha'f-dollar a week."

From the distance came the sound of wheels. Almena looked expectantly toward the road. The sound came nearer, and presently the smart turnout of Mr. Peake appeared, the sewing-machine agent leaning from his seat to look into the Bilberry yard.

"Is it all right, 'Mena?" he called.

"Yes, Al," replied Miss Bilberry. "It's better than all right."

Mr. Peake alighted from the wagon, hitched his horse to the post, and walked briskly into the yard. The dog made a ferocious dash at him. The widow and Mr. Nickerson looked gloatingly expectant; Eben whooped in glee.

But instead of tearing the intruder into bits, the animal leaped about him, wagging his stub tail and barking delirious welcome.

"Good boy, Tige," said Mr. Peake, coolly patting the creature's head. "Watch 'em, Tige."

"Tige" made a growling trip about the triangle and sat down again in his old place. The kitchen door opened and Almena came out. She was dressed in her Sunday gown and carried a bulging valise.

"Good-by, mother," she said. "Al and I are going to be married; then we're going on the evening train to Brockton. Good-by, Mr. Nickerson. By-by, Eben."

"Almena Bilberry!" screamed the widow, "jest you wait till I git down off this shed. If I don't——"

She extended one foot in the direction of the rain-barrel, but "Tige" made a dash, and she hurriedly drew it up again.

"That's a mighty fine dog," reflectively observed Mr. Peake. "I've had him for five years, and he never's let a stranger come in the yard unless I said the word. I hate to give him up, but seems 's if you folks needed him more'n I do. Stay here and watch 'em, Tige."

Almena climbed into the wagon. Mr. Peake followed her and took up the reins.

"Good-by, mother," called Miss Bilberry. "Come and visit us when we get settled, won't you?"

The sound of the wheels died away in the distance.

"G-r-r-r-r!" said "Tige," looking at the three prisoners.

Eggs as They Are Named

PRESSURE of business often compels District Attorney Jerome, of New York, to take his noonday meal in a typical "quick-lunch" restaurant. One day last spring Mr. Jerome was in his usual hurry, and going into a near-by lunchroom he hastily looked over the bill-of-fare and said to the waiter: "Let me have an order of fried eggs." Across the table sat a newspaper man, and the waiter asked him for his order. "Give me the same—but fresh ones, mind you." Then the waiter sang out to the man behind a partition: "Two orders of fried eggs—one of 'em fresh."

The next day Mr. Jerome hunted up a new place to appease his midday hunger.

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THE EAGLE'S SHADOW

(Continued from Page 11)

So she looked at the superscripture on the back of it.

Then she gave a little gasp and tore it open and read it by the firelight.

. . . . . .

Miss Hugonin subsequently took credit to herself for not going into hysterics. And I think she had some reason to; for she found the paper a duplicate of the one Billy had taken out of the secret drawer, with his name set in the place of hers. At the last Frederick R. Woods had relented toward his nephew.

Margaret laughed a little; then she cried a little; then she did both together. Afterward she sat in the firelight, very puzzled, and very excited, and very penitent, and very beautiful, and was happier than she had ever been in her life.

"He had it in his pocket," her dear voice quavered; "he had it in his pocket, my brave, strong, beautiful Billy did, when he asked me to marry him. It was King Cophetua wooing the beggar-maid—and the beggar was an impudent, ungrateful, idiotic little *piece!*" Margaret hissed, in her most shrewish manner. "She ought to be spanked. She ought to go down on her knees to him in sackcloth, and tears, and ashes, and all sorts of penitential things. She will, too. Oh, it's such a beautiful world—*such* a beautiful world! Billy loves me—really! Billy's a millionaire, and I'm a pauper. Oh, I'm glad, glad, *glad!*"

She caressed the paper that had rendered the world such a goodly place to live in—caressed it tenderly and rubbed her cheek against it. That was Margaret's way of showing affection, you know; and I protest it must have been very pleasant for the paper. The only wonder was that the ink it was written in didn't turn red with delight.

Then she read it through again, for sheer enjoyment of those beautiful, incomprehensible words that disinherited her. How *lovely* of Uncle Fred! she thought. Of course, he'd forgiven Billy; who wouldn't? What beautiful language Uncle Fred used! quite prayer-booky, she termed it.

Then she gasped.

The will in Billy's favor was dated a week earlier than the one they had found in the secret drawer. It was worthless, mere waste paper. At the last Frederick R. Woods' pride had conquered his love.

"Oh, the horrid old man!" Margaret wailed; "he's left me everything he had! How *dare* he disinherit Billy! I call it rank impertinence in him. Oh, boy dear, dear, *dear* boy!" Miss Hugonin crooned, in an ecstasy of tenderness and woe. "He found this first will in one of the other drawers, and thought *he* was the rich one, and came in a great whirl of joy to ask me to marry him, and I was horrid to him! Oh, what a mess I've made of it! I've called him a fortune-hunter, and I've told him I love another man, and he'll never, never ask me to marry him now. And I love him, I worship him, I adore him! And if only I were poor——"

Ensued a silence. Margaret lifted the two wills, scrutinized them closely, and then looked at the fire interrogatively.

"It's penal servitude for quite a number of years," she said. "But, then, he really *couldn't* tell any one, you know. No gentleman would allow a lady to be locked up in jail. And if he knew—if he knew I didn't and couldn't consider him a fortune-hunter, I really believe he would——"

Whatever she believed he would do, the probability of his doing it seemed highly agreeable to Miss Hugonin. She smiled at the fire in the most friendly fashion, and held out one of the folded papers to it.

"Yes," said Margaret, "I'm quite sure he will."

There I think we may leave her. For I have dredged the dictionary, and I confess I have found no fitting words wherewith to picture this inconsistent, impulsive, adorable young woman dreaming brave dreams in the firelight, of her lover and of their united future.

I should only bungle it. You must imagine it for yourself.

It is a pretty picture, is it not?—with its laughable side, perhaps; under the circumstances, whimsical, if you will: but very, very sacred. For she loved him with a clean heart, loved him infinitely.

Let us smile at it—tenderly—and pass on.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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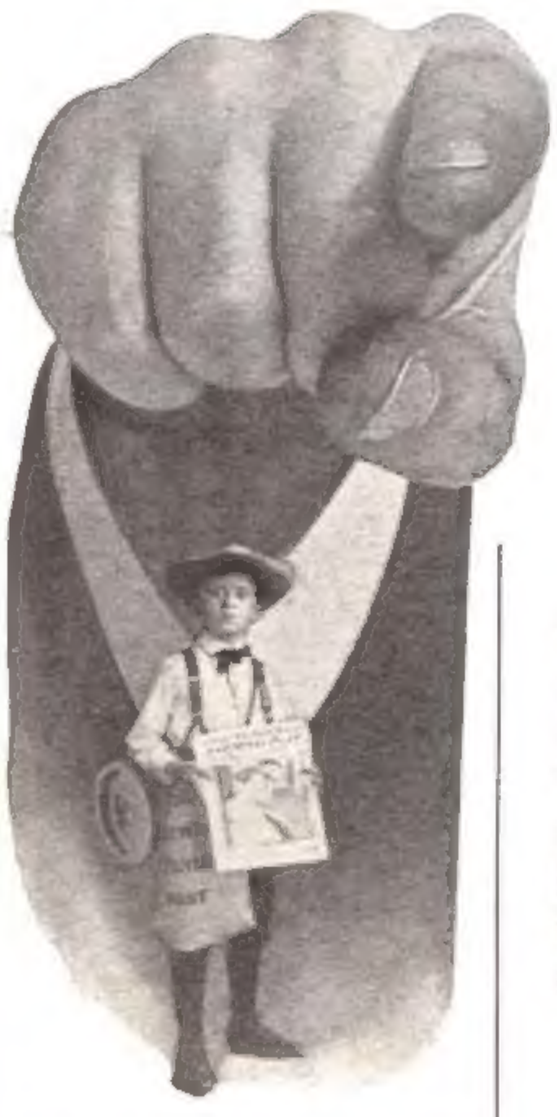

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